



# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**INFORMATION OPERATIONS VERSUS CIVILIAN  
MARKETING AND ADVERTISING: A COMPARATIVE  
ANALYSIS TO IMPROVE IO PLANNING AND  
STRATEGY**

by

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March 2008

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<b>REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE</b>			<i>Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188</i>	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.				
<b>1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)</b>		<b>2. REPORT DATE</b> March 2008	<b>3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED</b> Master's Thesis	
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b> Information Operations Versus Civilian Marketing and Advertising: A Comparative Analysis to Improve IO Planning and Strategy			<b>5. FUNDING NUMBERS</b>	
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b> Dan Chilton				
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000			<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>	
<b>9. SPONSORING /MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> N/A			<b>10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER</b>	
<b>11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b> The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.				
<b>12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited			<b>12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE</b>	
<b>13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)</b> <p>The Global War on Terror is a conflict that cannot be confronted through traditional warfare alone. The U.S. must re-focus its efforts on Information Operations to achieve GWOT objectives. In an environment where rapidly advancing technology is drastically improving the individual's ability to conduct IO against the U.S. and given the political and moral restrictions placed on U.S. military action, having the most powerful and technologically advanced capabilities in the world no longer guarantees success. The U.S. needs to develop highly effective Information Operations to win the support of the local populace before, during, and after major fighting in order to ensure a lasting victory. Current Information Operations strategies and tactics may be much more suited to achieve this through the use of civilian marketing and advertising fundamentals to organize, plan, and execute IO strategy.</p> <p>The objective of this work is to analyze and develop the concept of utilizing civilian advertising and marketing fundamentals for Information Operations planning and execution. This analysis focuses on the integration of traditional Information Operations planning, tactics, and strategies, with those known to be successful in American civilian marketing and advertising in order to create a more intuitive, efficient, and effective IO process.</p>				
<b>14. SUBJECT TERMS</b> : Information Operations, Marketing, Advertising, IO Decision Making Process, Strategy, Planning			<b>15. NUMBER OF PAGES</b> 97	
			<b>16. PRICE CODE</b>	
<b>17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT</b> Unclassified	<b>18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE</b> Unclassified	<b>19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT</b> Unclassified	<b>20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b> UU	

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**INFORMATION OPERATIONS VERSUS CIVILIAN MARKETING AND  
ADVERTISING: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS TO IMPROVE IO PLANNING  
AND STRATEGY**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND OPERATIONS**

from the

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Global War on Terror is a conflict that cannot be confronted through traditional warfare alone. The U.S. must re-focus its efforts on Information Operations to achieve GWOT objectives. In an environment where rapidly advancing technology is drastically improving the individual's ability to conduct IO against the U.S. and given the political and moral restrictions placed on U.S. military action, having the most powerful and technologically advanced capabilities in the world no longer guarantees success. The U.S. needs to develop highly effective Information Operations to win the support of the local populace before, during, and after major fighting in order to ensure a lasting victory. Current Information Operations strategies and tactics may be much more suited to achieve this through the use of civilian marketing and advertising fundamentals to organize, plan, and execute IO strategy.

The objective of this work is to analyze and develop the concept of utilizing civilian advertising and marketing fundamentals for Information Operations planning and execution. This analysis focuses on the integration of traditional Information Operations planning, tactics, and strategies, with those known to be successful in American civilian marketing and advertising in order to create a more intuitive, efficient, and effective IO process.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Autumn, Lila, Beaux, and my entire family, thank-you all for the patience, the support, and the love that made this endeavor, and everyone that I undertake, possible.

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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS PAPER**

The Global War on Terror is a conflict that cannot be confronted through traditional warfare alone. In an environment where rapidly advancing technology is drastically improving the individual's ability to conduct IO against the U.S. and given the political and moral restrictions placed on U.S. military action, having the most powerful and technologically advanced capabilities in the world no longer guarantees success. The U.S. needs to develop highly effective Information Operations to win the support of the local populace before, during, and after major fighting in order to ensure a lasting victory. Current Information Operations strategies and tactics may be much more suited to achieve this through the use of civilian marketing and advertising fundamentals to organize, plan, and execute IO strategy.

This work defines, explains, and analyzes IO and private sector marketing and advertising in order to express the correlation between them. Further, this work analyzes current processes and strategies used in IO to those used in civilian marketing and advertising to identify integration opportunities that could lead to more intuitive, effective, and efficient Information Operations.

## **B. SECTIONS OVERVIEW**

### **1. Information Operations**

Information Operations are a vital aspect of modern war fighting that the U.S. must become more proficient at in order to achieve lasting victories. This section defines IO, describes IO planning, responsibilities, and objectives associated with an IO campaign. Further, this section defines and describes the information environment, the correlation to civilian marketing and advertising and the information environment, and some problems associated with IO.

## **2. Marketing and Advertising**

Marketing and advertising are essential elements of American business that have influenced millions of people and have helped develop the American economy into the most robust in the world. This section defines marketing and advertising, explains the fundamentals associated with the planning of marketing and advertising strategies, and describes how these could be correlated to IO planning. This section further displays the organization of marketing planning and summarizes the thought process behind each step of the fundamental aspects of marketing and advertising campaigns.

## **3. Analysis of Compatibility**

IO, marketing, and advertising have very similar objectives. “Information operations have the same goal as marketing communications: to influence a target audience to respond positively to a message. Because IO and marketing both attempt to elicit physical as well as psychological responses, both ought to utilize similar methods. The U.S. military should tap the abundance of creative marketing talent in America and implement a more complete approach to IO planning and execution.” (Doty and Trent. 2005) This section analyzes these objectives to justify the correlation between the IO planning process and that of civilian marketing and advertising. This section further describes the validity of this correlation through each aspect of civilian marketing planning and how it is relevant for IO. Finally, this section demonstrates how each step of the fundamental aspects of marketing and advertising can be transformed to be relevant for IO planning and used to develop a more focused, intuitive, IO planning process.

## **4. Conclusion**

In order for the U.S. to become more proficient and efficient at IO, this work suggests utilizing the fundamental aspects of civilian marketing and advertising to develop a more intuitive and effective IO planning process. This final section provides the recommendations and suggestions that this work developed that could make this a reality. Further, this section provides recommendations for future research to further develop the idea of correlating IO and civilian marketing and advertising.

## **II. INFORMATION OPERATIONS**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter explains and defines Information Operations (IO) and the information environment. The first section defines what IO is, what it is comprised of, and the goals associated with IO. The next section further explains IO by defining the Core, Supporting, and Related capabilities that are associated with IO. The third section explains the IO planning process, what the IO Cell is and who is responsible for what. In addition, section three, explains what Measures of Effectiveness (MOEs) and Measures of Performance (MOPs) are. Section four explains the dimensions of the information environment and the similar relationship marketing, advertising, and IO have within the physical, cognitive, and information dimensions. The final section discusses some of the problems associated with IO organization, planning, and execution.

### **B. INFORMATION OPERATIONS**

#### **1. Objectives and Goals**

Information Operations includes a wide variety of military operations with the explicit goal of obtaining, maintaining, and controlling the information environment to ensure a competitive advantage over the adversary. The actual definition according to Joint Publication 3-13 is: “Information operations (IO) are described as the integrated employment of electronic warfare (EW), computer network operations (CNO), psychological operations (PSYOP), military deception (MILDEC), and operations security (OPSEC), in concert with specified supporting and related capabilities, to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp adversarial human and automated decision making while protecting our own.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) These five “Core Capabilities” (EW, CNO, PSYOP, MILDEC, and OPSEC) are supplemented by Supporting and Related IO capabilities. The Supporting capabilities are information

assurance (IA), physical security, physical attack, counterintelligence, and combat camera. The Related IO capabilities are public affairs (PA), civil-military operations (CMO), and defense support to public diplomacy.

Although “The principal goal is to achieve and maintain information superiority for the U.S. and its allies,” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) through the correct combination and integration of each of the Core, Supporting, and Related IO capabilities the United States intends to “effectively communicate U.S. government capabilities and intentions, rapidly disseminate persuasive information to a diverse audience in order to directly influence their decision making in support of U.S. interest, and undermine senior leadership and popular support for employing terrorists or using weapons of mass destruction.” (Secretary of Defense. 2003)

## **2. Definitions of IO**

### ***a. Core Capabilities***

To fully describe Information Operations the IO core capabilities must be individually defined and explained. First, “Psychological Operations (PSYOP) are planned operations to convey selected truthful information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately, the behavior of their governments, organizations, groups, and individuals.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) The purpose of PSYOP is to instill or reinforce attitudes and behaviors of a target audience in concert with U.S. objectives. In order to do this, the U.S. utilizes various mediums including, but not limited to, radio, print, television, and the Internet.

Military Deception is a core capability defined as, “...those actions executed to deliberately mislead adversary decision makers as to friendly military capabilities, intentions, and operations, thereby causing the adversary to take specific actions (or inactions) that will contribute to the accomplishment of the friendly forces’ mission.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) MILDEC can be anything that creates or optimizes an artificial fog of war that results in a competitive advantage for the

force that executes the MILDEC. To have successful MILDEC, Operational Security (OPSEC), must be established, implemented, and explicitly followed. “OPSEC is a process of identifying critical information and subsequently analyzing friendly actions and other activities to: identify what friendly information is necessary for the adversary to have sufficiently accurate knowledge of friendly forces and intentions; deny adversary decision makers critical information about friendly forces and intentions; and cause adversary decision makers to misjudge the relevance of known critical friendly information because other information about friendly forces and intentions remain secure.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) OPSEC is not only a capability to protect sensitive information, but also a process to identify unclassified information that could be pieced together to formulate friendly actions and intentions. By identifying and controlling this type of information, the U.S. can ensure that its other Information Operations are not compromised.

Electronic Warfare (EW) “refers to any military action involving the use of electromagnetic (EM) and directed energy to control the EM spectrum or to attack the adversary. EW includes three major subdivisions: EA, electronic protection (EP), and electronic warfare support (ES). EA involves the use of EM energy, directed energy, or anti-radiation weapons to attack personnel, facilities, or equipment with the intent of degrading, neutralizing, or destroying adversary combat capability. EP ensures the friendly use of the EM spectrum. ES consists of actions tasked by, or under direct control of, an operational commander to search for, intercept, identify, and locate or localize sources of intentional and unintentional radiated EM energy for the purpose of immediate threat recognition, targeting, planning, and conduct of future operations.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006)

Computer Network Operations, “CNO, along with EW, is used to attack, deceive, degrade, disrupt, deny, exploit, and defend electronic information and infrastructure. For the purpose of military operations, CNO are divided into CNA, CND, and related computer network exploitation (CNE) enabling operations. CNA consists of actions taken through the use of computer networks to disrupt, deny, degrade, or destroy information resident in computers and computer networks, or the computers and

networks themselves. CND involves actions taken through the use of computer networks to protect, monitor, analyze, detect, and respond to unauthorized activity within DoD information systems and computer networks. CND actions not only protect DoD systems from an external adversary but also from exploitation from within, and are now a necessary function in all military operations. CNE is enabling operations and intelligence collection capabilities conducted through the use of computer networks to gather data from target or adversary automated information systems or networks.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) PSYOP, MILDEC, OPSEC, EW, and CNO are the Core capabilities of Information Operations.

***b. Supporting Capabilities***

Information Operations are further enhanced by their supporting capabilities; Information Assurance, Physical Security, Physical Attack, Counter Intelligence, and Combat Camera. “Information assurance (IA) is defined as measures that protect and defend information and information systems by ensuring their availability, integrity, authentication, confidentiality, and nonrepudiation.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) It is used to protect information and information system’s confidentiality, integrity, and availability. IA is the supporting capability that IO depends on to ensure the correct information gets to the correct personnel at the appropriate time. “Physical security is that part of security concerned with physical measures designed to safeguard personnel, to prevent unauthorized access to equipment, installations, material, and documents, and to safeguard them against espionage, sabotage, damage, and theft. The physical security process includes determining vulnerabilities to known threats, applying appropriate deterrent, control and denial safeguarding techniques and measures, and responding to changing conditions.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006)

Physical Attack is another supporting capability that can be employed in support of IO. Used in conjunction with, or in support of, other Information Operations, physical attack can maximize the intended effect on the adversary. Since “Physical Attack” is a phrase that describes itself, it is unnecessary to further define the actual phrase, in that, the term “Physical Attack” in IO means exactly that, a physical attack.

Counter Intelligence is a supporting capability that “ consists of information gathered and activities conducted to protect against espionage, other intelligence activities, sabotage, or assassinations conducted on behalf of foreign governments or elements thereof, foreign organizations, foreign persons, or international terrorist activities.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006)

The final IO supporting capability is Combat Camera (COMCAM). “COMCAM supports all of the capabilities of IO that use images of U.S. or friendly force operations, whether to influence an adversary or other TAs or support U.S. forces or allies. They provide images for PSYOP, MILDEC, PA, and CMO use, but can also be used for BDA/measures of effectiveness (MOEs) analysis. COMCAM can also provide records of IO actions for subsequent rebuttal proceedings.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) COMCAM has become a crucial tool utilized in support of IO to shape public opinion and perception. One of the best ways that this is accomplished is by embedding reporters with military units on the ground. This program allows for a video account of what actually takes place in theatre and is run through COMCAM. The Supporting IO capabilities play a vital role in the effectiveness and success of Information Operations

### *c. Related Capabilities*

The final capabilities that define IO are Public Affairs (PA), Civil Military Operations (CMO), and Defense Support to Public Diplomacy (DSPD). “Pubic Affairs are those public information, command information, and community relations activities directed toward both external and internal audiences with interest in DoD. PA is essential for joint forces information superiority, and credible PA operations are necessary to support the commander’s mission and maintain essential public liaisons. PA’s principal focus is to inform domestic and international audiences of joint operations to support combatant command public information needs.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) In order for other IO and PA to be effective they must be coordinated and synchronized to ensure U.S. credibility remains intact. Information Operations that

require wide dissemination of a message will rely on PA to get that message out quickly and at the right time to maximize effectiveness.

Civil Military Operations “CMO are the activities of a commander that establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relations between military forces, governmental and nongovernmental civilian organizations and authorities, and the civilian populace.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) CMO is most effective when used pre and/or post combat operations to positively influence public perception in the immediate operational environment. The final related capability is Defense Support to Public Diplomacy “which includes those overt international information activities of the USG designed to promote U.S. foreign policy objectives by seeking to understand, inform, and influence foreign audiences and opinion makers and by broadening the dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) Through the proper coordination of all of the IO Core, Related, and Supported capabilities, IO are thoroughly defined and express the intricate and complicated nature of Information Operations.

## **C. A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF PLANNING AND EXECUTION OF INFORMATION OPERATIONS**

### **1. IO Organization and Planning**

In order to make a valid comparison of IO to civilian advertising and marketing, the IO planning process must be explained. IO planning is a process that, in order to be successful, must be an integral part of operational development throughout every phase of a campaign. This process is developed and executed through an IO cell. The IO cell generally consists of personnel who have some sort background training in Information Operations, or those who have thorough operational and tactical knowledge of the current operation. Figure 1 displays the individuals that make up a notional IO cell at the Combatant Commander Staff level.



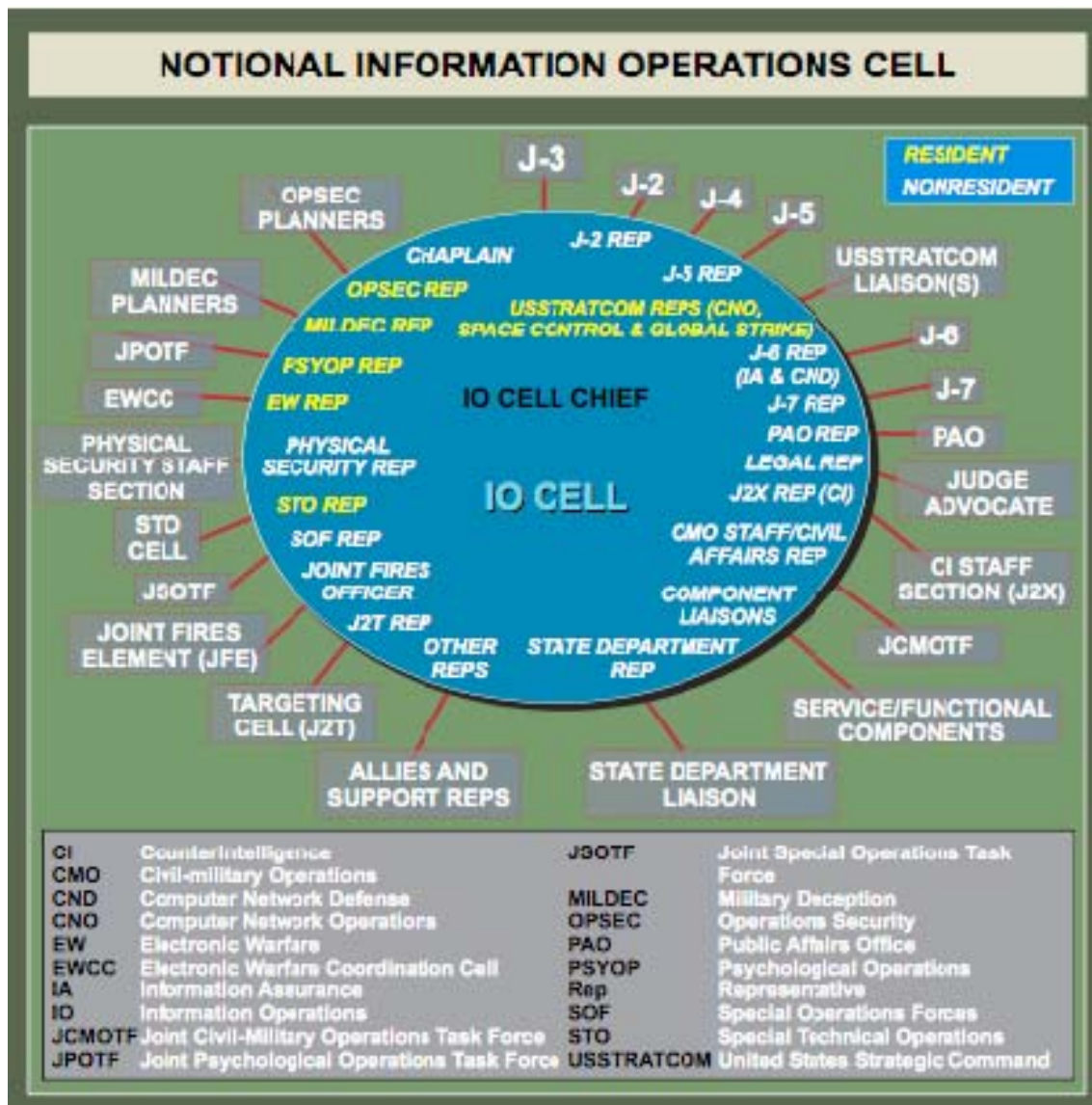


Figure 1. Notional Information Operations Cell (JP3-13 p. IV-5)

Figure 2 explains what occurs during each step of the planning process in the IO cell and what the intended output or requests should be at each stage of operational planning.

## INFORMATION OPERATIONS CELL ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES AS PART OF JOINT PLANNING

PLANNING PROCESS STEPS	IO CELL PLANNING ACTION	IO CELL PLANNING OUTCOME
Planning Initiation	Monitor situation. Review guidance and estimates. Convene IO cell. Gauge initial scope of the IO role. Identify organizational coordination requirements. Initiate identification of information required for mission analysis and COA development. Validate, initiate, and revise PIRs/RFIs. Recommend IO strategies and conflict resolution.	Request taskings to collect required information.
Mission Analysis	Identify specified, implied, and essential IO tasks. Identify assumptions, constraints, and restraints relevant to IO. Identify IO planning support requirements (including augmentation) and issue requests for support. Initiate development of MOEs and MOPs. Analyze IO capabilities available and identify authority for deployment and employment. Identify relevant physical, informational and cognitive properties of the information environment. Refine proposed PIRs/RFIs. Provide IO perspective in the development of restated mission for commander's approval. Tailor augmentation requests to missions and tasks.	List of IO tasks. List of assumptions, constraints, and restraints. Planning guidance for IO. IO augmentation request. IO portion of the commander's restated mission statement.
COA Development	Select IO core, supporting, and related capabilities to accomplish IO tasks for each COA. Revise IO portion of COA to develop staff estimate. Provide results of risk analysis for each COA.	List of objectives to effects to IO tasks to IO capabilities for each COA.
COA Analysis & Wargaming	Analyze each COA from an IO functional perspective. Identify key IO decision points. Recommend IO task organization adjustments. Provide IO data for synchronization matrix. Identify IO portions of branches and sequels. Identify possible high-value targets related to IO. Recommend IO CCIRs.	IO data for overall synchronization matrix. IO portion of branches and sequels. List of high-value targets related to IO.
COA Comparison	Compare each COA based on mission and IO tasks. Compare each COA in relation to IO requirements versus available IO resources. Prioritize COAs from an IO perspective.	Prioritized COAs from an IO perspective with Pros and Cons for each COA.
COA Approval	No significant IO staff actions during COA approval.	N/A

Figure 2. Information Operations Cell Actions and Outcomes as Part of Joint Planning (JP3-13 p. V-4)

INFORMATION OPERATIONS CELL ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES AS PART OF JOINT PLANNING (cont'd)			
PLANNING PROCESS STEPS	IO CELL PLANNING ACTION		IO CELL PLANNING OUTCOME
Plan or Order Development	Refine IO tasks from the approved COA. Identify IO capability shortfalls and recommend solutions. Update continually, all supporting organizations regarding details of the IO portion of plan details (access permitting). Advise supported combatant commander on IO issues and concerns during supporting plan review and approval. Participate in TPFDD refinement to ensure the IO force flow supports the CONOPS.		Updated IO estimates based on selected COA. Draft IO appendices and tabs, supporting plans. IO requirements to TPFDD development. Synchronized and integrated IO portion of operation plan.
Plan Refinement	No specific IO staff actions during plan refinement.		N/A
<b>CCIR</b>	Commander's Critical Information Requirement	<b>MOE</b>	Measure of Effectiveness
<b>COA</b>	Course of Action	<b>MOP</b>	Measure of Performance
<b>CONOPS</b>	Concept of Operations	<b>PIR</b>	Priority Intelligence Requirement
<b>IO</b>	Information Operations	<b>RFI</b>	Request for Information
		<b>TPFDD</b>	Time Phased Force Deployment Data

Figure 3. Information Operations Cell Actions and Outcomes as Part of Joint Planning cont'd (JP3-13 p. V-5)

Normally, Combatant Commanders will delegate the responsibility of developing, integrating, and coordinating IO to their staff Operations Officer (J3) who then designates an IO cell chief to lead the IO cell. Throughout the IO planning process, the IO cell chief is the point of contact for the IO cell staff and other agencies involved in the IO planning process. This individual will carry out the functions designated in Figure 4.

## INFORMATION OPERATIONS CELL CHIEF FUNCTIONS

- Coordinating the overall information operations (IO) portion of the plan for the joint force commander (JFC).
- Coordinating IO issues within the joint staff and with counterpart IO planners on the component staffs.
- Coordinating IO activities to support the JFC concept of operations.
- Recommending IO priorities to accomplish planned objectives.
- Determining the availability of IO resources to carry out IO plans.
- Recommending tasking to the operations directorate (J-3) for joint organizations, staff, and elements (e.g., electronic warfare planners, military deception planners) that plan and supervise the various capabilities and related activities to be utilized. Consolidated J-3 tasking ensures efficiency in planning and executing integrated IO.
- Serving as the primary "advocate" for IO targets nominated for attack throughout the target nomination and review process established by the JFC.
- Coordinating the planning and execution of IO between the joint organizations (including components) responsible for each element of IO.
- Coordinating intelligence and assessment support to IO.
- Coordinating IO inputs from joint centers and agencies.
- Coordinating liaison with the Joint Information Operations Center, Joint Warfare Analysis Center, and other joint centers.

Figure 4. Information Operations Cell Chief Functions (JP3-13 p. IV-4)

Since this is a basic overview of the IO planning process, additional tasks and functions of both the IO Cell and IO cell chief will not be discussed. None the less, the complexity of planning, developing, coordinating, and executing IO in an environment where the only consistency may be constantly occurring change, the complexity involved with this process can be understood from this basic overview.

### 2. Measures of Performance and Measures of Effectiveness

In order to justify the time and expense involved with the planning/execution of IO and to express the effectiveness these operations have in support of the over arching

campaign, the IO Cell utilizes Measures of Performance (MOP) and Measures of Effectiveness (MOE). “**MOPs** gauge accomplishment of IO tasks and actions. **MOEs** determine whether IO actions being executed are having the desired effect toward **mission accomplishment**: the attainment of end states and objectives. MOPs measure friendly IO effort and MOEs measure battlespace results.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) An MOP is a quantitative measure that expresses the sheer numbers involved with IO. For example, a MOP in a PSYOP campaign could be the number pamphlets dropped in a mission or the number of advertisements released in local newspapers to influence public opinion. In contrast, MOEs can be both quantitative and/or qualitative. A qualitative MOE, for example, could be “Percentage of degradation of a radar system over time as measured by an appropriate sensor.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) An example of a quantitative MOE could be an “Assessment of changes in bias of foreign media outlets.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) Figure 5 demonstrates the relationship between MOPs and MOEs.



## EXAMPLE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEASURES OF PERFORMANCE AND MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

Capability	Measures of Performance (MOPs)*	Measures of Effectiveness (MOEs)**	Remarks
Psychological Operations (PSYOP)	Percentage of PSYOP products disseminated	Extent that PSYOP changed the demonstrated behavior of the target audience	Often necessitates further intelligence requirements
Electronic Warfare (EW)	Percentage of adversary command and control (C2) facilities attacked	Effect of attacks on adversary C2 facilities' ability to pass critical information	MOE requires a change in a detectable and measurable activity
Operations Security (OPSEC)	Percentage of identified compromises of critical information or indicators with OPSEC measures applied	Observed adversary actions indicating lack of foreknowledge of friendly operations	MOE requires collation of all leaked information and comparison with adversary actions
Military Deception (MILDEC)	Days between updates on effectiveness of deception plans	Specific adversary actions taken based on friendly deception activities	MOE requires an estimate of how the adversary is expected to react if they do and if they do not believe the deception
Computer Network Operations (CNO)	Percentage of tasked network attacks conducted	Effect of network attacks on target systems	MOE requires access to a measurable output or to the adversary's own reporting of the attack

\*MOPs are derived from CJCSM 3500.04D, Universal Joint Task List (UJTL). Most MOP are answered by internal statistic generation.

\*\*MOEs vary and are based on IO objectives and individual planned tasks.

Figure 5. Example of the Relationship Between Measures of Performance and Measures of Effectiveness (JP3-13 p. V-8)

Developing and tracking MOPs and MOEs are the IO Cell's responsibility. This responsibility is developed by four general criteria that must be met. The general criteria considerations for MOPs and MOEs are: They must be "Ends Related, Measurable, Timely, and Properly Resourced." (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006)

"(1) **Ends Related.** They should directly relate to desired effects required to accomplish objectives.

(2) **Measurable.** Effectiveness or performance is measured either quantitatively or qualitatively. In order to measure effectiveness, a **baseline** measurement must be established prior to the execution, against which to measure system changes.

(3) **Timely.** The required feedback time should be clearly stated for each MOE and/or MOP and a plan made to report within specified time periods.

(4) **Properly Resourced.** The collection, collation, analysis, and reporting of MOE or MOP data requires personnel, budgetary, and materiel resources. IO staffs should ensure that these resource requirements are built into the IO plan during its development.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006)

These are the general criteria considerations for MOPs and MOEs, but it is the IO cell that must develop the mission relevant MOPs and MOEs that are suitable for the IO plan. The problems associated with this development and the complexity involved in selecting appropriate and accurate MOPs and MOEs are cumbersome, but necessary, details of IO mission analysis.

#### **D. THE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT**

Information Operations take place within the information environment. The information environment “...is the aggregate of individuals, organizations, and systems that collect, process, disseminate, or act on information. The actors include leaders, decision makers, individuals, and organizations. Resources include the materials and systems employed to collect, analyze, apply, or disseminate information. The information environment is where humans and automated systems observe, orient, decide, and act upon information, and is therefore the principal environment of decision making. Even though the information environment is considered distinct, it resides within each of the four domains. The information environment is made up of three interrelated dimensions: physical, informational, and cognitive.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006)

Figure 6 is a representation of the Information environment and explains the three dimensions it is derived of.

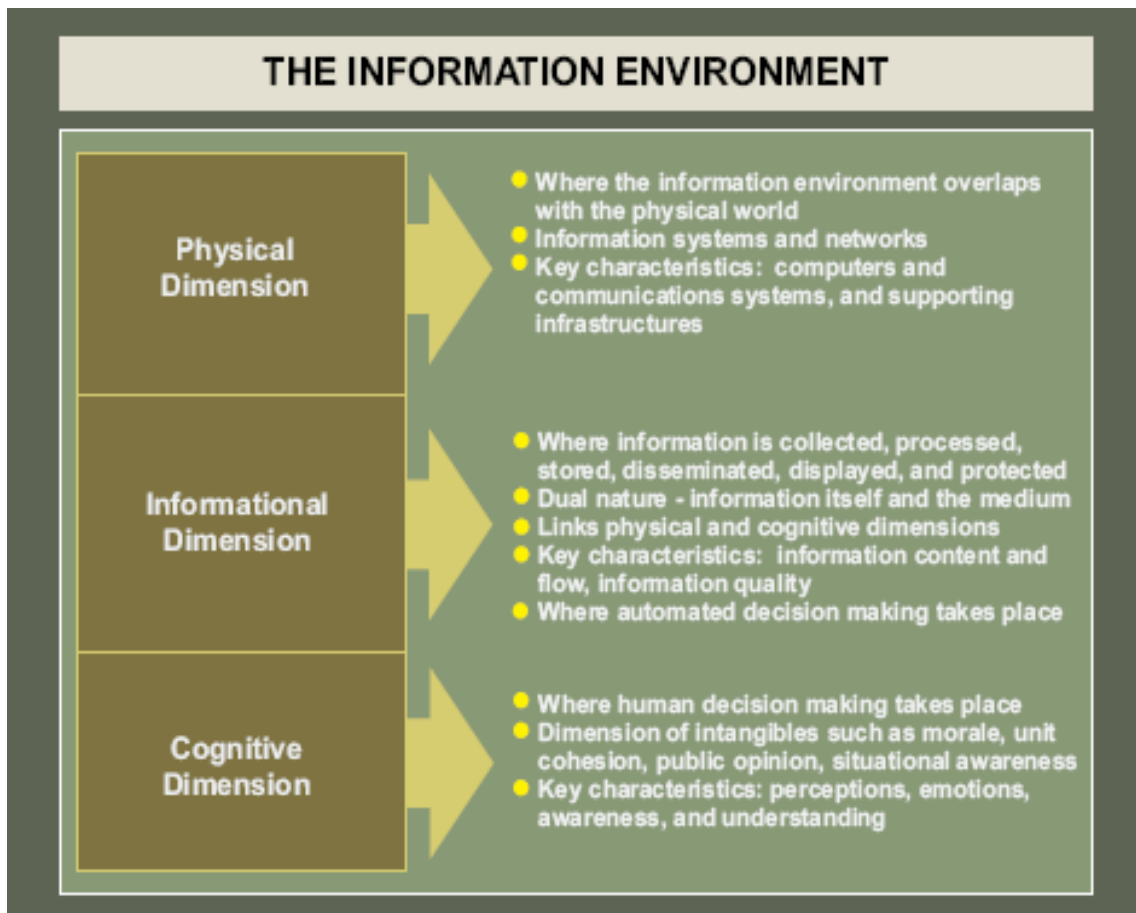


Figure 6. The Information Environment (JP3-13 p. I-2)

Information Operations use various means of the physical environment to alter an IO target's Information dimension to change their cognitive process with the specific intention of changing their behavior to support U.S. objectives. "The focus of IO is on the decision maker and the information environment in order to affect decision making and thinking processes, knowledge, and understanding of the situation...By influencing the way people receive, process, interpret, and use data, information, and knowledge." (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) The process of affecting people's perception in the information dimension by physical means to change their cognitive thinking and resulting behavior is an idea that has been developed through various psychological theories. These theories include the Mechanistic S-R (Stimulus-Response), Mechanistic S-Construct-R (Stimulus-Construct-Response), and two types of



Cognitive S-Cognition-R (Stimulus-Cognition-Response). (Weiner. 1972) The theory that best fits what Information Operations and marketing/advertising attempt to capitalize on is the Cognitive S-Cognition-R theory and construct. This theory can be summarized as one that encompasses this idea: “Thoughts intervene between incoming information and the final behavior response. Many cognitive processes determine action, such as information seeking, causal attributions, etc.” (Weiner. 1972) This idea provides the focus for effective IO, marketing, and advertising, is a critical point for the justification of the correlation of IO and marketing/advertising planning processes. This is also a factor that expresses the similar objectives of IO and marketing/advertising and is further analyzed in Chapters III and IV of this work.

## **E. SOME PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH CURRENT IO**

### **1. The Planning Process and the IO Cell**

The planning process for IO is a very complex system that necessitates extensive education, training, and experience to be an effective IO cell staff member. Due to this complexity, an individual assigned to an IO cell that is not experienced in IO, which may often be the case, may find it difficult to understand what is required throughout the process, much less, assist in developing and executing a good IO plan. One instance of this is step two in Mission Analysis of the IO planning process. Each sub-step of Mission Analysis is stated in Figure 2, however, even individuals that have experience with IO may find it difficult to recognize what these requirements actually demand. For example, what differentiates a specified task compared to an implied or essential task? What constitutes a valid IO assumption, constraint, or restraint? An inexperienced IO planner will have to first learn what the answers to these types of questions are and, because for most people the IO planning process is not intuitive, they may quickly find themselves overwhelmed. Although, this is a basic example about the Mission Analysis step alone, these types of questions that maybe subject to interpretation depending on the situation, are frequent throughout the entire planning process and can lead to ineffective

and, potentially, counterproductive IO products. Developing and meeting the requirements of the complex planning process itself detracts from the creative process needed to truly develop effective IO.

The IO Cell is a good concept that in most cases has some problems. Since the IO Cell is not a constantly stood-up department and is basically a conglomeration of personnel whom probably have different immediate superior officers to answer to, it can be difficult to develop the consistency and coordination needed to plan, develop, and execute a successful IO campaign. Further, most individuals that comprise an IO Cell have additional tasks and duties, from their individual departments, that detract from their full participation and concentration on IO. These additional tasks can cause numerous members to miss key IO planning meetings and updates, resulting in a loss of efficiency and effectiveness. This problem has been recognized in the IO Roadmap by former United States Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, “As IO grows into a full military competency, it may be necessary to consider making IO a dedicated military occupation specialty or career field...To be successful, an IO career force will have to break some cultural norms. Isolated communities of personnel should begin to think of themselves as IO personnel rather than personnel participating in a core component of IO.” (United States Secretary of Defense. 2003) Although most military officers pride themselves in being able to multi-task, their absence can derail the synergy and coordination needed to have a successful IO campaign and causes inefficiency in the IO Cell’s functionality.

## **2. MOPs and MOEs**

Measures of Performance and Measures of Effectiveness are IOs means of reporting how well the IO campaign is being carried out (MOP) and how well it is working (MOE). Even though MOPs are generally easy to quantify, MOEs are almost impossible to develop and support prior to executing the IO plan. For example, if PSYOP leaflets are distributed instructing a newly sanctioned local populace to surrender arms for food and after a couple of weeks the number of people that participate doubles, the IO cell cannot develop an accurate MOE that definitively attributes the additional participation to the leaflet distribution. The reason for this is because it is possible that

after a couple of weeks under the sanctions, the additional participation by the local populace may have been due to the basic need for food rather than the influence of the PSYOP leaflet. Colonel Baker, recently promoted to Brigadier General Baker (U.S. Army) and currently Division Chief, J5, Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate-Middle East under the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon, recognized this as a problem during his tour in Iraq and stated, “As with all operations, gauging IO effectiveness is important; however, the process of measuring IO success is not a precise science.” (Baker. 2006) In many instances of IO, the direct correlation between the IO effort and the results, may not be quantifiable in numbers and because of the many unforeseeable factors that can alter outcomes in war, or pre-conflict situations, MOEs are very difficult to establish prior to execution of IO.

### **3. Time and Effective IO**

With reference to time, there are many challenges that detract from the already difficult to establish effectiveness of IO. The military, in many instances, have to react quickly to avert a crisis situation from escalating into something worse. Information Operations are no different. This type of quick re-action situation necessitates a quick response that, in many instances, the current process of organizing, planning, and executing IO does not accommodate to be effective. General Baker, U.S. Army, expresses this fact in an article for Military Review based on his tour of duty in Baghdad circa 2003-2004. “The ponderous way in which centrally managed PSYOP products were developed, vetted, and approved through bureaucratic channels meant they were simply not being produced quickly enough to do any good...When we did request and receive theme support for our IO products, they were typically approved too late to address the issue for which we requested them.” (Baker. 2006) This type of frustration due to the inability to quickly organize, plan, authorize, and execute IO can result in a loss of initiative to the adversary and demoralize U.S. forces at the same time. General Baker further states, “With a significant amount of negative news being broadcast into their (the soldiers) living quarters on a daily basis, it was difficult for Soldiers to realize that they were having a positive impact on our area of operations.” (Baker. 2006) Due to these

types of problems associated with inefficient time management and IO execution, strategic planning for IO must include a process to allow operational IO planners to meet the time requirements the operational environment necessitates.

Another problem with reference to time is that many peoples' perceptions can take decades to change, especially, if the correct approach to doing so is not utilized. Influencing a population that has had hundreds of years of turmoil and civil unrest due to tribal feuds, religious differences, etc., is near impossible without dedicating a substantial amount of time to do so. Given the costs associated with war (casualties, economic, international relations), the American public and most political leaders will not support drawn out military efforts without "... beliefs that the stakes remain high and, to a lesser extent, that progress is being made..." (Larson and Bogdan. 2005) Due to these types of factors, the time necessary to make fundamental changes to a target peoples' perceptions may not be available. However, IO organization, planning, and execution that is based on the idea that time is a critical factor, can be effective in a relatively short amount of time, if empowered to do so. This work's objective is to suggest a process designed to be as effective as possible given limited time requirements and to assist IO planners in understanding non-intuitive IO concepts. This objective may be achieved through the correlation of marketing and advertising organization and planning processes to that of IO.

## **F. CONCLUSION**

This chapter defined and explained Information Operations, IO planning and organization, the information environment, and some problems associated with IO. Information Operations are naturally complex in that they occur in the information environment, but this complexity is compounded the adversary advancing capabilities and understanding of IO, a planning process whose characteristics are subject to interpretation, and by operational time requirements that consistently do not facilitate U.S. coordination and control requirements. This chapter also justifies the correlation of marketing and advertising planning processes to that of IO because each process attempts to use the various physical means to influence the informational dimension of a target

audience to affect their cognitive processes with the specific intention of influencing their behavior to support organizational objectives. This justification is the basis for the comparison/correlation of marketing, advertising, and IO planning processes, however, in order to fully understand this correlation, the fundamental ideas and definitions of marketing and advertising must be explained. These fundamental ideas and definitions are explained in detail in Chapter III of this work as well as further justifications for the comparison to Information Operations.

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### **III. CIVILIAN ADVERTISING AND MARKETING**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Civilian advertising and marketing are essential aspects of American business and are critical factors that helped develop the American economy to be the most robust in the world. It is through these channels, that American businesses have been able influence, not only Americans, but also people around the world to do just about anything they want them to. As stated in the purpose of IO, being able to influence a target audience to act in support of U.S. objectives is ideal and is one of the essential goals of IO. This chapter will define and explain the fundamentals of marketing and advertising strategies and tactics in order to develop an understanding of how American businesses have formulated successful campaigns. This will provide the basis for comparison to IO in the next chapter.

#### **B. MARKETING**

##### **1. Definition of Marketing**

There are many variations of the definition of marketing based on the perspective of the sources, however, according to the Marketing Faculty of the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University, "...marketing is the effort toward trying to understand customers, so as to deliver goods and services to satisfy their desires." (Iacobucci. 2001) Another definition of marketing from the Harvard Business Review is, "Marketing is the process of planning and executing the development, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services *to create exchanges* that satisfy individual and organizational objectives." (Silk. 2006) For this work and in consideration for future comparison to IO, the analysis will be on the fundamental ideas of marketing, rather than the individual words that comprise the variations in the definitions of marketing. Given this approach, these two definitions are sufficient to define the

fundamental idea of marketing for the purpose of this work. Definitions of the tactics involved with developing marketing strategy will be defined as they are used throughout the rest of this chapter.

## **2. Basic Marketing Strategy**

Since there are many variations on how to define marketing, also there are many opinions on the best strategies to organize, plan, and implement a successful marketing campaign. In order to make valid comparisons to current U.S. IO strategy in the next chapter, this work will describe some fundamental aspects of marketing strategy based on two Universities that are widely accepted as the best business schools in the United States. It is not the intention of this work to describe all aspects of these two civilian marketing authorities' strategies; however, it is our intent to describe the general concepts, relevant to IO, which are known successful marketing practices. Successful marketing strategy includes the basic "4Ps of marketing (product, price, place, and promotion)" (Silk, 2006). These are the general basis for marketing strategy and are widely accepted as a standard in civilian marketing strategy development. The four Ps can be broken down further and are supported through marketing fundamentals such as: understanding the marketplace and the customer; market segmentation and targeting; branding; distribution; product and price planning; and promotion. These marketing fundamentals are the supporting capabilities and will be the areas explained for comparison to the IO process.

### ***a. Understanding the Marketplace***

Understanding the marketplace is accomplished through thorough analysis and research of all elements of the market environment. These elements include anything that needs to be accounted for when developing a marketing strategy. Elements such as target customer cultural background, economic, political, and legal conditions, distribution, business infrastructure, competition, and technological development to name



a few. Just as in IO with the Information/Operational Environment, in civilian marketing, understanding the marketplace environment is a pre-requisite to developing a successful marketing strategy.

***b. Understanding Customers***

Understanding the customer in the marketplace environment is essential for developing effective marketing strategies. Although both of the referenced universities have variations on how to approach marketing strategy, they both emphasize that the most vital aspect of successful marketing is understanding the customer. “The definition of marketing as an exchange process makes the understanding, predicting, and influencing of customers the unique and central task of the marketing function...” (Silk. 2006) “Understanding customers is not just using “marketing research” as an information source, nor is it just performing a staff activity. It is a vital, and may well be *the* vital, resource factor for marketing.” (Iacobucci. 2001) Understanding the customer, though, is not an easy task. Since customers’ opinions and desires frequently change due to the influence of the internet, television, and radio in day-to-day activities, marketing staffs must rely on a multitude of tactics in order to understand customer behavior. “Researchers employ various techniques, such as one-on-one interviews, focus groups, or online surveys, to collect detailed information on customer needs, interests, and desires.” (Armstrong and Kotler. 2006) Conducting panel surveys and focus groups allow a company to get both personal and group ideas surrounding their products or services. These surveys and focus groups can be tailored to get both quantitative and qualitative raw data that, once analyzed, can help to understand customers more likely to value the product or service. These data, however, will not be able to predict future customer behavior, which is essential for a marketing staff to understand the customer in depth.

Customer behavior consists of the acts, processes, and social relationships displayed by individuals or groups before, during, and subsequent to an exchange process. Four commingling phenomena characterize customer behavior: (1) *people*, including individuals and informal or formal groups of varying sizes, (2) engaging in *activities*, including actions and processes, (3) in the context of interpersonal *relationships*, (4) which

create *experiences*, including those associated with obtaining, using, and dealing with the consequences of goods and services. (Silk. 2006)

Although market research is valuable for statistical analysis of what consumers have done in the past, it alone is not valid for predicting the future behavior of the same consumers. “The point to remember is that one ought not to take market research data, check the sample size, and then extrapolate the data. Sample size and sampling statistics have nothing to say about what people will do in the future.” (Iacobucci. 2001) “If you have an explanation in mind, data can play a very important role in the process of understanding consumers. The role of data is to make you more confident in the explanation you hold *or* to make you give up that explanation and look for a better one.” (Iacobucci. 2001) With an explanation for the results of their research data, which is supported by the data itself, a marketing staff can be confident in their understanding of their intended customers and can then concentrate on market segmentation and targeting.

### *c. Market Segmentation and Targeting*

After analysis of the market research, market segmentation (if necessary) and targeting can begin. “Segmentation involves dividing the market of potential customers into homogenous subgroups. These subgroups may be distinguished in terms of their behavior patterns, attitudes, demographic characteristics, psychological profile, and the like.” (Iacobucci. 2001) Due to the fact that brands would prefer to attract a large market, rather than partition the market into sub-groups, market segmentation is not ideal, however, “...segmentation is frequently used if a brand does not have the means to differentiate itself from the competition when targeting the mass market.” (Iacobucci. 2001) The point of market segmentation, though, is to focus the marketing staff on the market segment, or segments, that it can serve more efficiently and effectively with their products. This is accomplished through the process of target market selection and competitive positioning, also known as targeting. “Target market selection involves evaluating each market segment’s attractiveness and selecting one or more of the market segments to enter. It is the next logical step following segmentation...The objective is to select segments in such a way that the firm maximizes its profit.” (Silk. 2006) The

purpose of segmentation and targeting is to ensure the firm's marketing campaign is focused on the audience that will maximize the effectiveness of their efforts, thus, resulting in the maximum exchange of value between the customer and the firm. This provides the basis for a starting competitive position for the company and if done correctly can lead to a competitive advantage in the market.

*d.      Branding*

Branding is the attempt of marketing staffs to produce a general idea in the market environment about their product, service, or company as a whole. Once a company has established itself, positively or negatively, it will be associated with that brand by the people who interact with it. Due to the fact that the United States already has a brand in the minds of the people in most areas of the world, understanding how civilian corporations develop, manage, and improve their brands would be useful for IO planners to understand. "In marketing terminology, a brand is the summary of all perceptions about products, employees, the organization, and so on that marketing creates. (Doty and Trent. 2005) The Figure 7 displays one way to express and organize a brand strategy.



Figure 7. Brand Strategy Flow Chart (Moderandi Guidebook p. 10)

With a competitive position established, the marketing staff can work to make the brand the company desires through these mediums in Figure 7.

Successful marketing plans must incorporate the image they would like their product, or company as a whole, to be associated with into every aspect of the business. “In an age of accelerating product proliferation, enormous customer choice, and growing clutter and clamor in the marketplace, a great brand is a necessity, not a luxury.” (Webber. 1997) Building a great brand starts with understanding what the customer thinks. “The real starting point is to go out to consumers and find out what they like or dislike about the brand and what they associate as the very core of the brand concept.” (Webber. 1997) Marketing staffs can use this information to keep their campaign inline with consumer sentiment and the company’s desired brand image. This will allow for the company to develop their brand over time and make the necessary marketing changes

that consumers recommend. Having a positive brand image will develop customer loyalty, customer retention, and lead to a larger portion of the market share for the company.

If you take a long-term approach, a great brand can travel worldwide, transcend cultural barriers, speak to multiple consumer segments simultaneously, create economies of scale, and let you operate at the higher end of the positioning spectrum.” (Webber. 1997) Branding is a part of marketing that one way or another will occur and must be considered throughout the life cycle of a product and company to be successful. “SOMETIMES IN BUSINESS, a good brand dies. Everyone knows and respects the brand, but there is a gap between people’s knowledge and their desire to actually buy the product. When the company can’t close that gap, the brand slowly but surely finds its way into the dustbin of history. (Jackson. 2001)

Promotion of a brand is generated through advertising campaigns and customer knowledge. Advertising campaigns are designed to express the firm’s ideal brand, however, it can also be generated through word of mouth based on the customer experience. Due to this, “Marketers recommend the following strategies for brand-workforce synchronization to ensure a consistent customer service delivery:

- Create a brand driven organization
- Address customer complaints quickly
- Inventory all brand-customer touch-points
- Properly select and train the sales force” (Glenn, Helmus, and Paul. 2007)

If a company is unable to be consistent with their customer service delivery, the people that have disappointing experiences with the company will inform other potential customers and, even with a superior product, the brand will be tarnished. A tarnished brand could then lead to a loss of customer loyalty and potential new customers. Therefore, in order to attain a positive brand image, at a minimum, a company must present itself well in advertising campaigns and ensure their customer service delivery is sound and effective.

*e. Distribution*

Distribution is the process used to sell the product to target customers and is directly related to pricing of the product. Since IO planners must also consider how their products are to be distributed and the costs associated with that, understanding the civilian process of distribution may be useful. Figure 8 displays how distribution channels affect the marketing process.

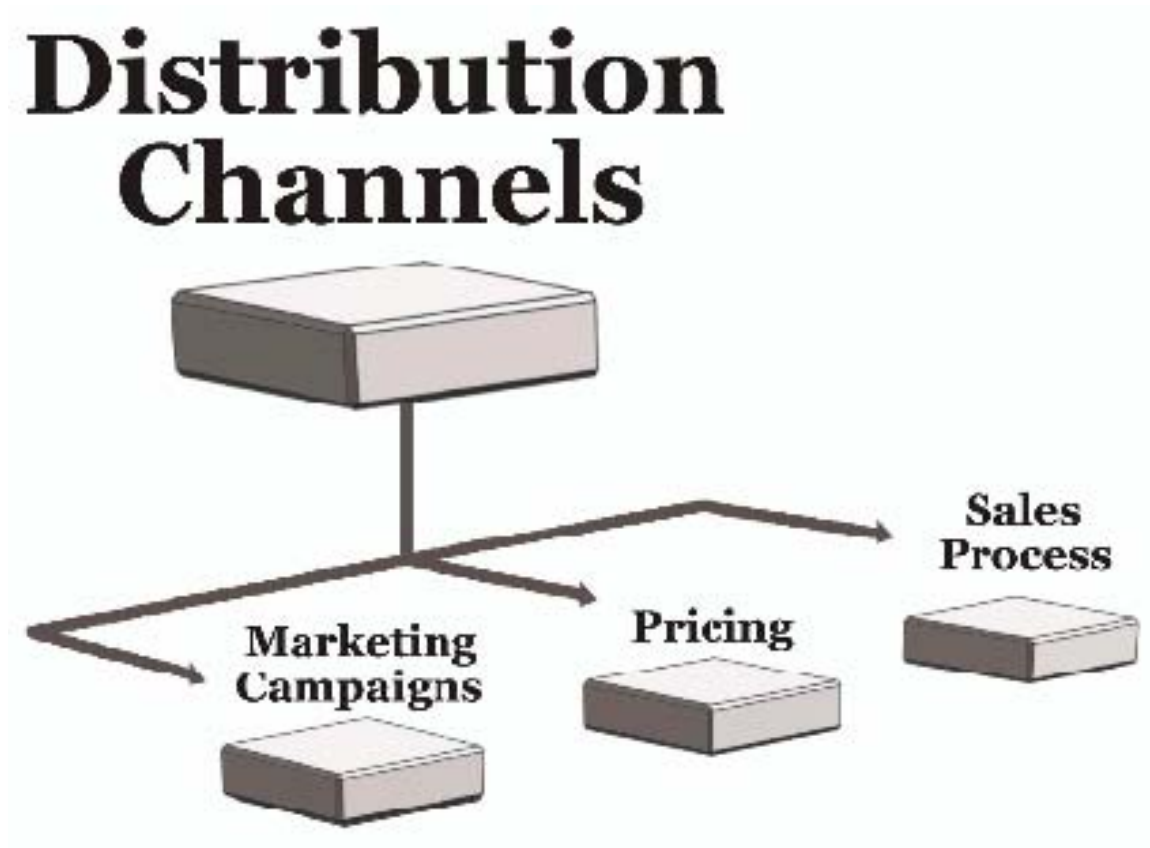


Figure 8. Distribution Channel Flow Chart (Moderandi Guidebook p. 13)

There are many ways a company can distribute their product to the customer. Some examples are:

- Direct to End Users - the company utilizes avenues that allow it to sell their products directly to the customer (end-users).

- Dealer Network - the company sells the products through a geographical network of dealers who then sell the products to the end-users.
- Value Added Reseller – the company sells the products to a company that bundles it with other products or services and then re-sells it.  
(Moderandi Inc. 2006)

To create a good distribution program, focus needs to be on the desires of the end-users. For example, if customers need personalized service, utilize a local dealer network or reseller program to provide that service...If the company sells through these groups instead of, or in addition to, selling direct, treat the entire channel as a group of customers – and they are since they’ re buying your product and reselling it.  
(Moderandi Inc. 2006)

If the marketing staff can understand and meet the needs of these end-users, it will result in maximum value exchange for everyone involved and lead to efficient distribution of the product.

#### ***f. Product and Price Planning***

Product and price planning are functions of marketing strategy designed to ensure that the product satisfies the wants and needs of the target audience and to ensure it is priced appropriately to entice customers to buy it while maintaining profitability and brand requirements of the firm. This is an important aspect of marketing that can assist IO planners in understanding what price their target audience will have to pay for their compliance with the IO product and if the product is enticing enough for the target audience to actually pay that price. The major difference between civilian product and price planning and IO is that the price paid for complying with IO products could be loss of employment, risk of being ostracized by local society, or in extreme cases, even death. Due these types of possibilities and the likelihood that an adversary is not restricted in their retribution for the target audience’s compliance with U.S. IO messages, IO planners should ensure they fully understand the ramifications associated with their products. This

aspect of IO product and price planning will be further explored in the next chapter, however, in order to make this correlation transparent, the process that civilian marketers utilize to develop product and price planning must be explained.

Product planning utilizes market research to customize the firm's product to meet current and future needs of the target audience. This process helps to ensure that the firm is not considering only its own operational goals when producing a product, rather, the customer's wants and needs as well. For example, a target audience that is subject to extremely hot temperatures year-round will probably never want to buy a heavy coat. Product planning ensures that the clothing company produces items that are appropriate for target audiences that are subject to these types of specifics. Further in depth product planning could result in more specialized products to meet the customers' demands and result in better sales for the firm.

Actual product planning begins with knowing the target audience. Conducting surveys and focus groups to ensure the product is tailored to meet wants and needs of the target customer can increase the brand value of the product from the consumer's perspective. Through this research the company can adjust the product to meet these want s and needs, thus, increasing the value that consumers place on the product. This will the increase the flexibility the company will have when planning a price for the product and ensure the planning for product is appropriate.

Price planning is another element in successful marketing. Pricing is dependent on many factors such as the firm's strategic brand objectives, customer target, competitive position, costs of production, and product life cycle. Figure 9 displays some of the aspects that should be considered when price planning.



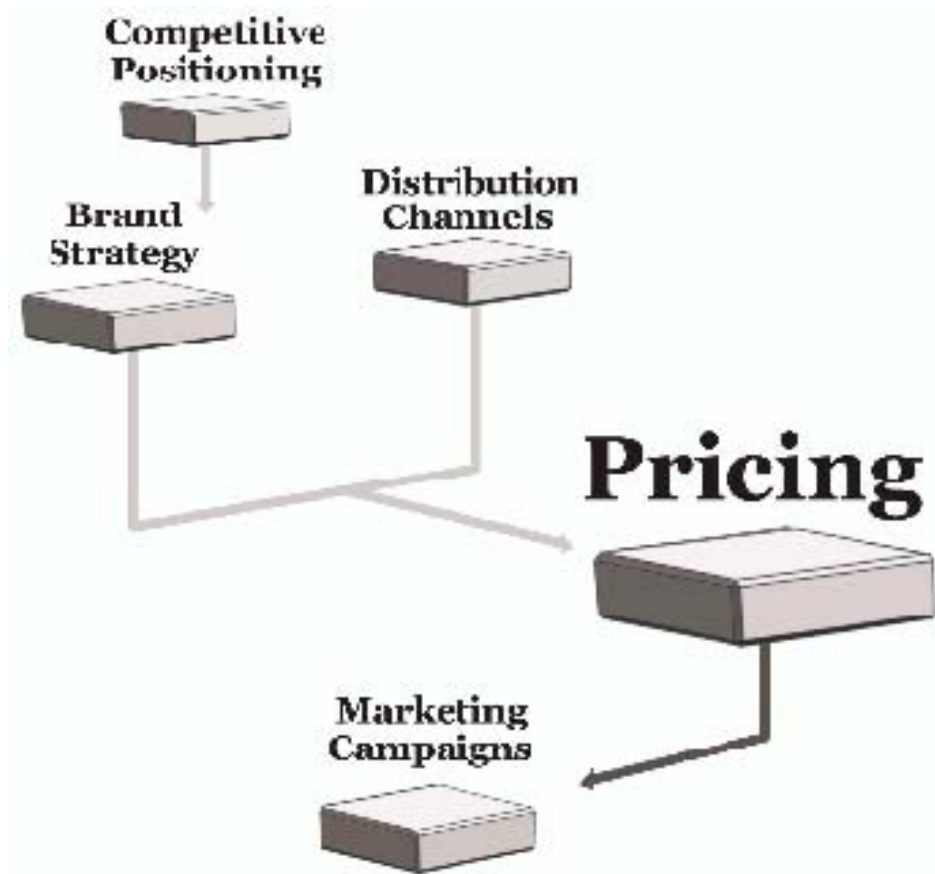


Figure 9. Competitive Positioning Flow Chart (Moderandi Guidebook p. 17)

When pricing a product, the marketing staff must also take into account the value the consumer will gain from buying the product.

Consider this definition of value: “Value is defined as the perceived worth in monetary units of the set of economic, functional/technical, and psychological benefits received by the customer in exchange for the price paid for a product offering taking into consideration available competitive offerings and pricings. (Iacobucci. 2001)

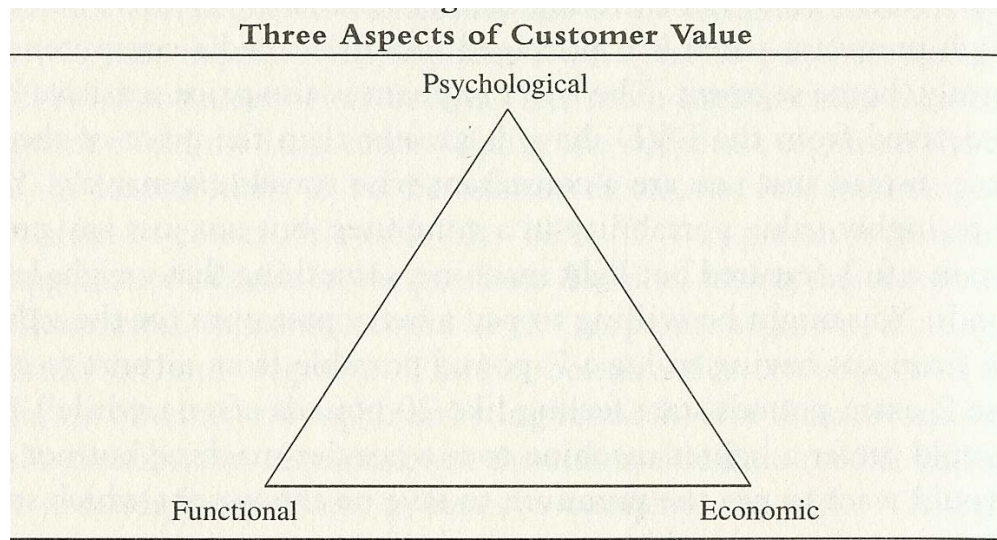


Figure 10. Aspects of Customer Value (Iacobucci p. 282)

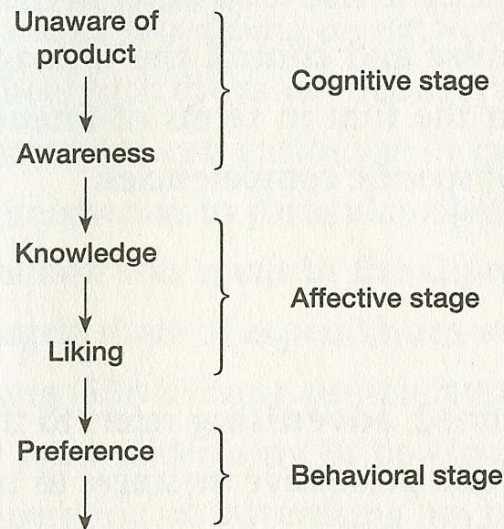
The value that a customer derives from a product or service is a function of the quality delivered by the product or service which in turn is obtained from the economic, functional, and psychological benefits provided by the product or the service. Economic benefits are driven by price and increased productivity. Functional benefits are obtained through product features. Examples of psychological benefits are satisfaction, comfort, reliability, security, peace of mind, control, power, relationships, brand name, and so on. (Iacobucci. 2001)

Understanding the value gained by customers from owning the product will assist the marketing staff in price planning and is a key factor to setting a price that will equalize the benefits of both consumer and seller.

***g. Promotion***

Product promotion is what a company does to make the consumer aware that the product exists and to get the consumer to choose its product over competitors' products. This process is the civilian equivalent of IO utilizing physical means to affect a target audience's information dimension to change their cognitive processes and behavior to support organizational objectives. Effective promotion of a product or service can be understood through the "...hierarchy of effects model." (Silk. 2006)

## Hierarchy of effects



Source: R. J. Dolan, "Integrated Marketing Communications," Class Note 9-599-087 (Boston: Harvard Business School, 2000).

Figure 11. Hierarchy of effects model (Silk p. 135)

The steps presented in Figure 11 "...can be described in terms of the type of response required from consumers to move along in the hierarchy: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. In the cognitive stage, the marketing communications purpose is to influence the minds of the potential consumers. The first step is to make a consumer *aware* of the existence of the product and then build *knowledge* by conveying some information about it. The remaining steps in the affective stage are to move from *liking* to *preferring* the product over others and finally having a strong intent or conviction to buy it. The process advances to the behavioral stage that culminates in a repeat purchase of a product." (Silk, 2006) This process is very similar to what IO planners attempt to do in the information environment to affect behavior change and provides another justification for correlation of IO, marketing and advertising.

One way a marketing staff may approach this process is to utilize the “six Ms model for communications planning” (Silk. 2006) shown in Figure 12

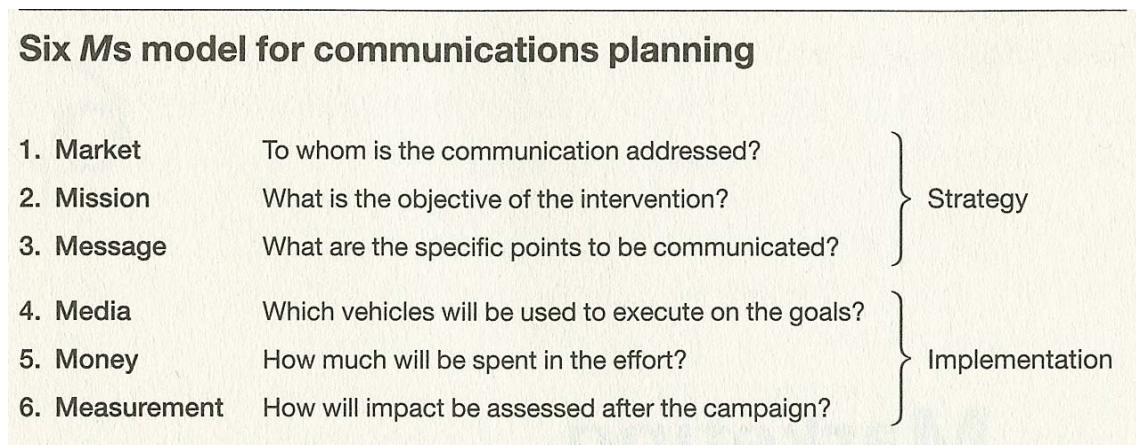


Figure 12. Six Ms model for communications planning (Silk p 134.)

Utilizing the six Ms model creates the road map for the marketing staff to develop a communications plan from strategy to implementation. This assists the marketing staff by focusing their promotional efforts and develops a step-by-step tool to ensure continuity of the campaign. The correlation to this process and that of IO planners could lead to a more intuitive IO planning process and will be further investigated in Chapter IV.

In order to justify the expenses related with promotion of a product or service, companies must include a mechanism to allow the marketing staff to learn about the effects of the promotion campaign. These mechanisms have similar rules and limitations as MOPs/MOE of IO in that they must be measurable, timely, and properly resourced. Like IO as well, marketing staffs “cannot afford to wait till the end of a campaign to find out whether they are achieving expected results --they need to be able to monitor and respond to campaign performance in real time.” (CDC Market First. 2007) Some ways to do this are:

- **“Perform effective campaign testing** - Test campaigns on sample lists before widespread launch to determine effectiveness and refine messaging and other campaign elements. Create A/B split tests to compare different designs, offers, and copy.
- **Measure and modify programs in real time** - Monitor campaign responses as they are being executed. Track click-throughs, open rates, leads generated, and lead quality. Track leads through the sales process to determine whether they result in new business, quantifying direct impact on revenues.
- **Improve Return on Investment (ROI) and be able to prove it** - Analyze and report on campaigns to demonstrate success or identify areas for improvement. Report the ROI and cost per lead from each campaign accurately by product, sales channel, or type of customer, helping them validate expenditure and identify patterns that help marketing teams repeat and refine tactics that work.” (CDC Market First. 2007)

In addition, a Measure of Effectiveness that is not accurately measurable, such as population’s feeling about a brand, is not useful when justifying promotional expense. An MOE that is not quantifiable in a timely manner or one whose expense to obtain the information is greater than the value of having the information gained is also useless for promotional justification. Measuring the effects of a promotional campaign is a difficult task because, just as in IO, the results are not always directly attributable to the promotion and they are subject to influence. Marketing and promotion will always be at the mercy of the dynamic nature of the marketplace, therefore, measuring the effectiveness of a campaign will continue to be relative to the situation, not necessarily to the promotional campaign itself.

### **3. Best Practice: Fundamental Marketing**

The best practices of marketing campaigns vary based on the product, service, and intended audiences, but the firms that repeatedly succeed understand the fundamentals of

ideal marketing. “Organizations succeed because of their ability to satisfy outside clients for their goods and services. This ability depends on how well organizations understand their clients and use these insights effectively. Ultimately, the competitive advantage one firm has over another stems from its superior understanding of its customers and a superior process for thinking about and acting on this information.” (Silk. 2006) This fundamental marketing is what creates preferences for a particular brand’s product over another brand’s product even though they may be essentially the same product. Figure 13 displays an organizational table that is representative of a fundamentally sound marketing plan that could establish brand superiority and be referenced to build a fundamentally sound IO campaign.



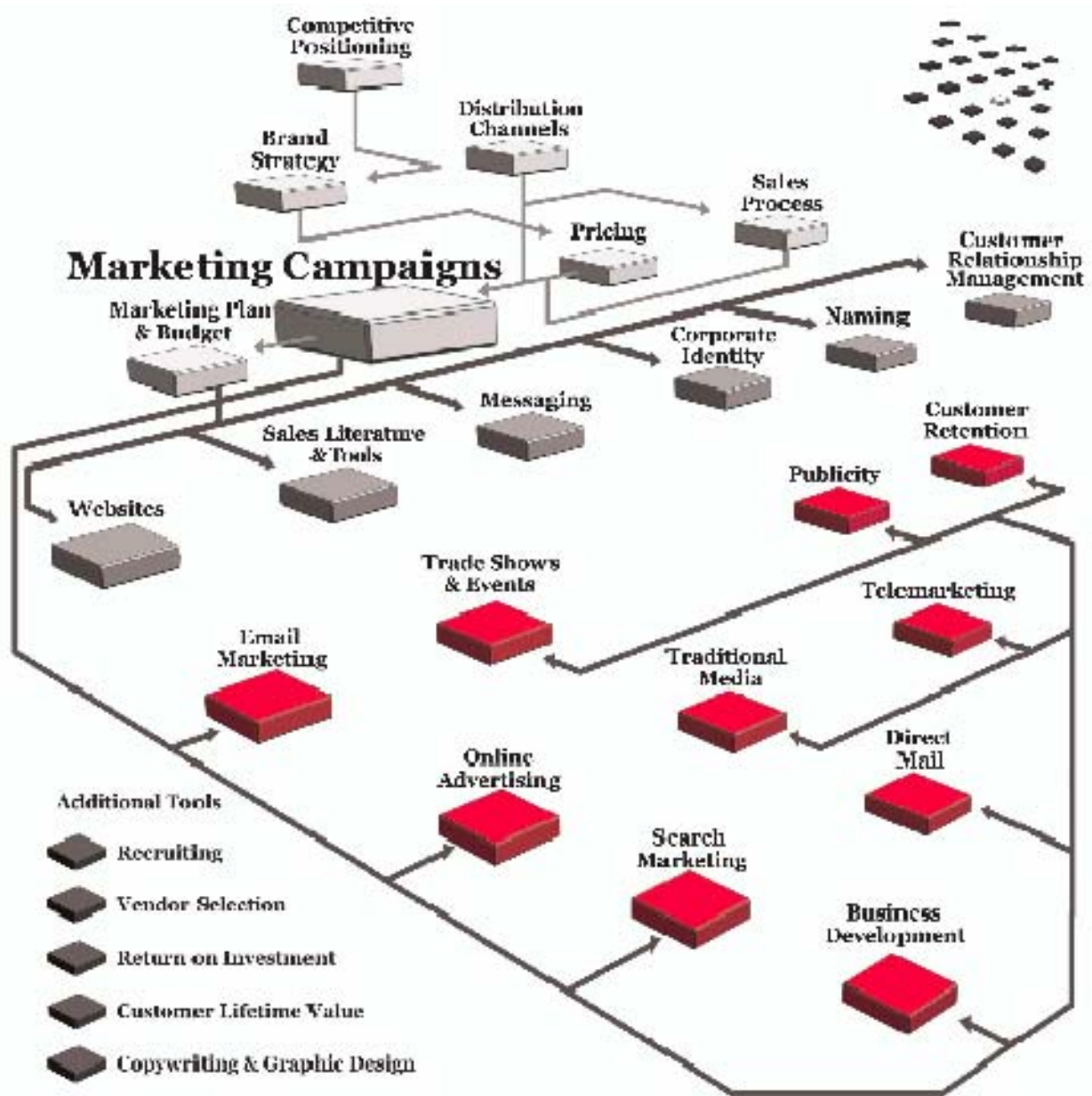


Figure 13. Marketing Campaign Flow Chart (Moderandi Guidebook p. 24)

#### 4. **Summary of Key Concepts in Fundamental Marketing**

- **Understand the Market.** “Document the size of the market, major competitors and how they’re positioned. Determine whether the market is in the introductory, growth, mature, or declining stage of its life. This “lifecycle stage” affects your entire marketing strategy.” (Moderandi Inc. 2006)
- **Understand the Customer.** Talk with prospects and customers, and conduct extensive market research if time, budget and opportunity allow. Uncover the customers’ true wants and needs to learn about what can be delivered to solve their problems and beat the competitors.
- **Targeting and Segmenting.** “Group the prospective target audiences into “segments” that have similar problems and can use the product in similar ways. By grouping them into segments, the staff can then efficiently target each group and market to them specifically...Understand the problems that the market faces and evaluate the competition already in the market. Rate the company and direct competitors on operational efficiency (price), product leadership and customer intimacy. Impartial analysis is key to understanding where the company rates against competitors.” (Moderandi Inc. 2006)
- **Create a Competitive Position.** “Identify areas where the competition is vulnerable. Determine whether marketing focus can be centered on those vulnerable areas of opportunity. Identify products/services the company can offer to meet the true needs of the market in a new and better way.” (Moderandi Inc. 2006)
- **Define the value proposition.** “There are three core types of value that a company can deliver: operational efficiency (the lowest price), product leadership (the best product), or customer intimacy (the best solution and service). Determine which one you’re best equipped to deliver: your decision is your “value proposition.”” (Moderandi Inc. 2006)



- **Develop a Brand Strategy.** Understanding the company's target audience is key to developing a brand strategy. Utilize market research to ensure the brand strategy is in concert with the appropriate emotional aspects of the target audience. "List the features and benefits of your product/ service. A feature is an attribute – a color, a configuration; a benefit is what that feature does for the customer. Determine which benefits are most important to each of your segments. Identify which benefits are emotional – the most powerful brand strategies tap into emotions... Look at the emotional benefits and boil them down to one thing that your customers should think of when they think of you. That's what your brand should represent." (The Strategic Marketing Guidebook p. 11) In addition, "Poll your customers, employees and vendors. Are their impressions consistent with your strategy, if not, work on the elements you can improve." (Moderandi Inc. 2006)
- **Develop Product and Price Planning.** Ensure the product is tailored to meet the wants and needs of the customer, not just the company's output goals. Ensure the price is in support of the company's strategic branding goals and maximizes value for both customer and company.
- **Promotion.** Ensure promotion is in concert with what the target audience would appreciate. Also, ensure that the promotion has a mechanism to assess effectiveness and is in line with the company's brand image.
- **Distribution.** Concentrate on the needs of the end-user to develop the appropriate distribution channels. The right mix of distribution can result in a competitive advantage for the company and improve brand image.

Together, these steps are the essential building blocks of a successful marketing campaign and a business as a whole. These building blocks could be slightly altered into IO specific building blocks that assist planners to better understand their objectives and to develop more effective IO products designed for both mission accomplishment and U.S. brand improvement. This alteration to IO specific building blocks is presented in Chapter IV of this work.

## **C. ADVERTISING**

### **1. Definition of Advertising**

For this work, "...advertising refers to the paid placement of announcements and persuasive messages in time or space to inform and/or persuade members of a particular target market or audience about a product, service, organization, or idea" (Silk. 2006) This definition expresses some of the same objectives that Information Operations are intended to achieve. Advertising and IO both intend to persuade and inform target audiences to do something that will support company goals (in advertising) or mission objectives in IO. This similarity suggests that civilian advertising strategies and tactics may be able to be incorporated into IO planning and execution, therefore, an analysis of how civilian campaigns are conducted is appropriate for this work.

### **2. Advertising Strategy**

Advertising is an extension of marketing strategy that must be developed during the marketing process to ensure the brand identity is represented well and correctly. Ad campaign strategy is dependent on many aspects including, but not limited to, the product itself, the brand, the market environment, current economy status, and target audience. Although, there are many aspects that must be accounted for advertising strategy, "Consumer insight is the starting point in developing effective advertising." (Iacobucci. 2001) Just as in marketing and IO, advertising staffs need to understand their target audience. This is accomplished through interacting with potential customers to obtain consumer insight on a product or service. Further, consumer insight is obtained by conducting focus groups, in-depth interviews, and surveys.

With consumer insights, advertising staffs can then tailor their campaign through a push strategy, a pull strategy, or a combination of the two. A push strategy is when an advertiser "targets retail establishments in order to establish or broaden a market presence. A pull strategy is one that targets end-users (consumers), who are then expected to ask retailers for the product and thus help "pull" it through the distribution channels." (Hillstrom and Hillstrom. 2006) The combination of the two is a hybrid, which is

designed to target both the end users and retailers. Once a strategy has been selected, the staff must choose how to execute, or “approach” it. Some examples of approaches are the Hard Sell, Convergent Attributes-The Big Idea, Story Grammar, and Comparative Advertising. Regardless of the approach and strategy utilized, a good advertising campaign can make a mediocre product great, just as a bad ad campaign can make a great product mediocre. Therefore, advertising strategy is a critical aspect of successful marketing.

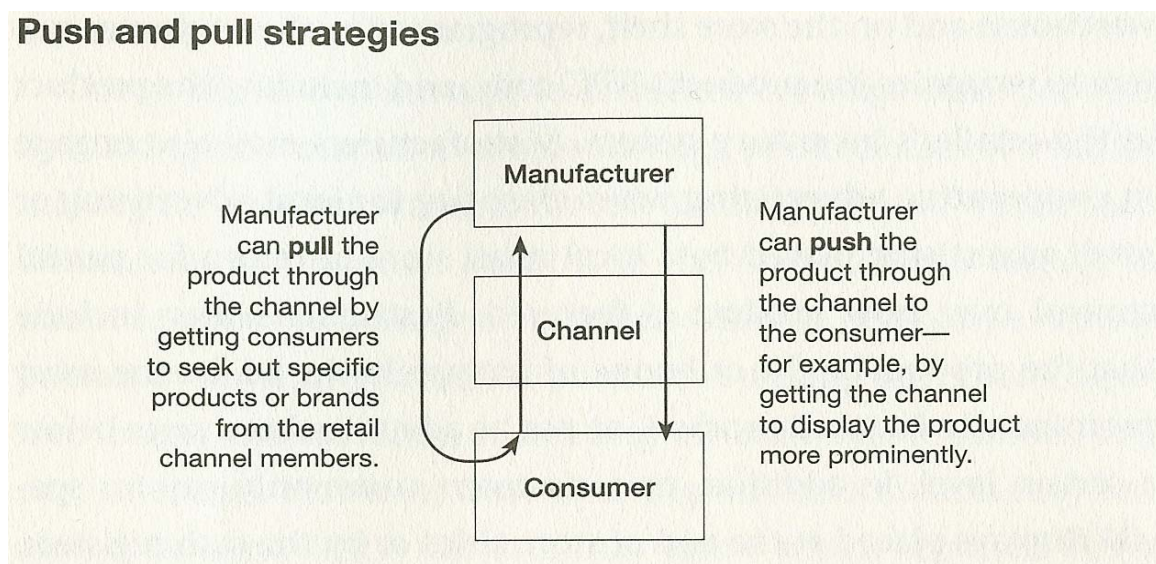


Figure 14. Push and Pull Strategies (Silk p. 139)

**a. The Push Method**

The aim of the push method is to convince retailers, salespersons, or dealers to carry and promote the advertiser’s product. This relationship is achieved by offering inducements, such as providing advertising kits to help the retailer sell the product, offering incentives to carry stock, and developing trade promotions. (Hillstrom and Hillstrom. 2006)

***b. The Pull Method***

The aim of the pull method is to convince the target consumer to try, purchase, and ultimately repurchase the product. This process is achieved by directly appealing to the target consumer with coupons, in-store displays, and sweepstakes. (Hillstrom and Hillstrom. 2006)

***c. The Hybrid Method***

Just as the name suggests, the hybrid method is a combination of both the push and pull methods. The aim of the hybrid method is convince retailers to push the advertiser's product and convince the target customers to pull (request) the product through the distribution channels.

**3. Approaches**

Although there are many approaches an advertising campaign can utilize, this work will examine some of the more frequently used approaches in order to express relevance to IO. These approaches are the Hard Sell, Convergent Attributes-The Big Idea, Story Grammar, and Comparative Advertising. IO planners could use approaches like these to develop more effective IO products.

The hard sell is an approach that is dependent on the product having an attribute that is different and desirable to the target customer. "The hallmark of the hard sell is "buy this brand, get this benefit"...Hard sell has the virtue of ensuring that a brand name is linked to its benefit." (Iacobucci. 2001) Advertising for Nyquil cold medicine made by Vicks is an example of the hard sell. Vicks advertises, via television, that Nyquil is "The night time, sniffing, sneezing, coughing, aching, stuffy head, fever, so you can rest medicine." This hard sell campaign that Vicks utilizes is very effective at getting the target audience to associate their products with desired effects because of their strong point of difference. For example, if a customer has seen the advertisement and has any of the symptoms listed, then they may associate the solution to their sickness with Nyquil. With the hard sell, advertisers are attempting to get customers to automatically associate

a solution to a specified problem, with the use of their brand. If the advertisement is successful, the association it creates in the minds of the target audience will then guide them to buy the product the next time they have the specified problem. This approach may be useful from an IO standpoint if the operational environment supports a specific problem that an IO product can solve.

The next approach, Convergent Attributes – The Big Idea, “involves identifying a benefit that is focal to consumers (usually the benefit that defines a category) and over time presenting a variety of attributes that apply the benefit to sustain the presentation of brand news. At the same time, the context is kept constant so that people can readily link the advertising information to the brand.” (Iacobucci. 2001) One example of “The Big Idea” was the advertising campaign of Chevrolet’s Silverado truck. For fourteen years Chevy featured ads with the slogan “Like a Rock” while displaying current facts about new Silverado trucks. The ad would attempt to display that the truck could drive over very hazardous terrain and would not break. The trucks were “Like a Rock” and the benefit to the consumer was that they could drive the trucks anywhere and it would not break, thus, it must be of superior quality. The ad campaign sought to express that the only changing attributes were the looks and features of the truck, while the superior quality was always the same. Utilizing this approach for IO would be useful if the campaign was able to sustain itself for a long time with over-arching themes that remained the same throughout all IO products.

Story Grammar is an approach that “...is based on the notion that people store information in memory in the following form: problem, episodes to address the problem, and outcomes.” (Iacobucci. 2001) This type of advertising creates a story for the target audience, in which, the main character has some sort of extreme problem, or situation, that is solved through the use of the product. “The hope is that consumers will infer that the product works under the extreme conditions depicted, it will work in less extreme situations that they face.” (Iacobucci. 2001) One example of this type of approach is the Mentos mints advertising campaign. In their commercials, the main characters face a mundane problem or situation that is usually caused, or observed, by an antagonistic character. The main character then consumes a Mentos mint and consequently comes up

with a solution to their problem/ situation. Once the problem is resolved, the main character confidently displays the package of the Mentos mints to the antagonistic character, who then seems to understand how the main character derived the solution. As silly as it may seem to think that someone could solve their day-to-day problems by eating a mint, this inference combined with a catchy jingle has made Mentos one of the most recognized candies in the world. Even though these are not extreme conditions, this is an excellent representation of Story Grammar advertising. This type of approach to IO could be very effective because many intended target audiences of IO have severe problems that the U.S. could solve, with the right amount of cooperation or support.

Comparative advertising is another option for advertisers to elaborate a message. Comparative advertising "...involves pitting the attributes of a firm's brand against those of competitors' brands." (Iacobucci. 2001) The advertiser's intent is to display the superiority of his brands attributes over those of the competitors. Comparative advertising can be illustrated through the ads of Apple and their Macintosh computers. In the ads, there are two men who stand side-by-side and introduce themselves. One is dressed in casual clothes and introduces himself as a Mac. The other, who is dressed in a more formal suit and tie, introduces himself as a non-Macintosh personal computer. The two then act out a brief scene in which the capabilities and limitations of the 'Mac' and 'PC' are compared. This results in the PC being characterized as a less capable, more complicated, person/platform than the informal, easy to use, Mac. With this type of comparison, the target audience is informed of both brands computers. The ad's comparison of the two computers is accurate and it relies on the customer to make the rational choice when deciding which one to buy. The result that Apple wants the consumer to ascertain from the comparison commercial is that the Mac is better than the PC. This is the foundation of comparative advertising and can be a very effective approach if your product is superior and the audience is rational. Information Operations utilizing this approach would probably be very effective if the audience knew that the comparison was accurate and the value associated with the U.S. product was very enticing.

#### 4. Medium Selection

There are many tools that advertisers have at their disposal to promote their product or service. These include television, radio, the internet, news papers, magazines, billboards, and so on. What distinguishes one type of medium for over another is subject to many different explanations, however, the characteristics of different advertising mediums can group them by what kind of communication they are and by their “level of feedback and customization.” (Silk. 2006)

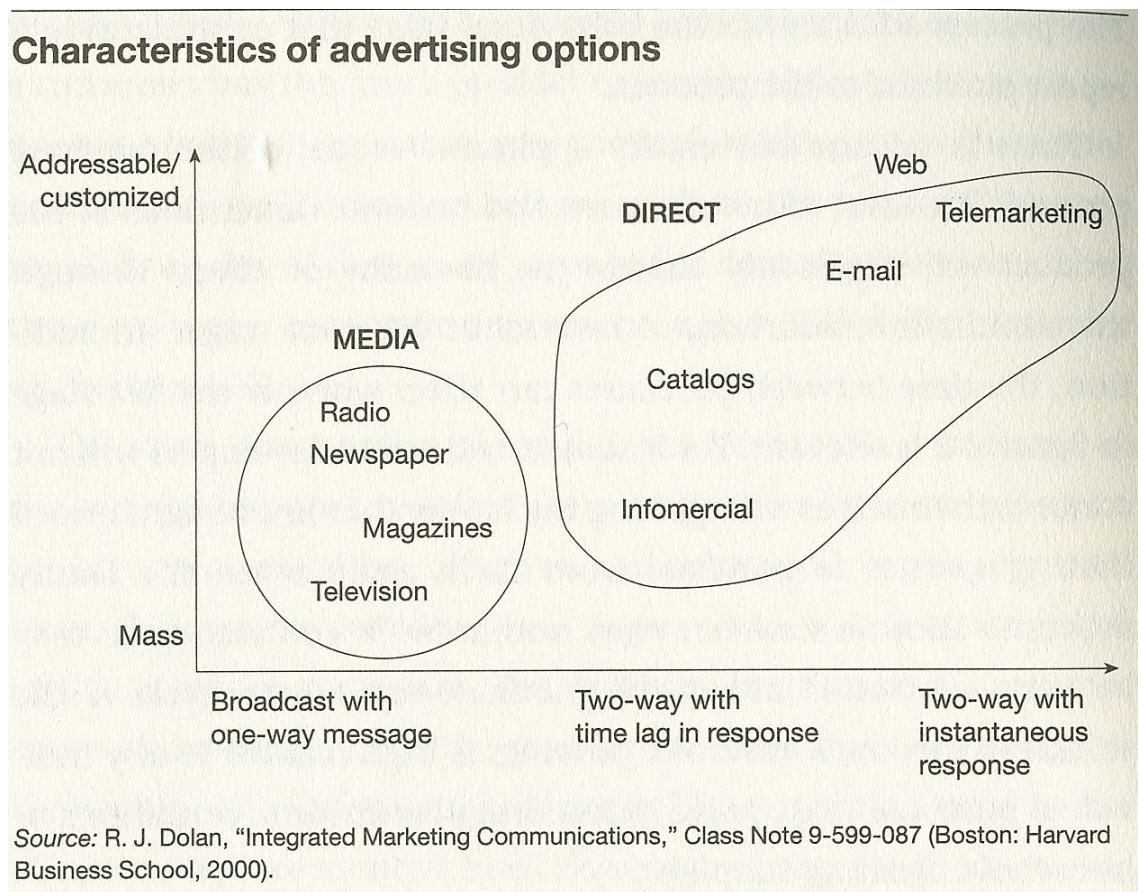


Figure 15. Characteristics of Advertising Options (Silk p. 136)

Each advertising medium has a level of feedback and customization associated with it. For example, telemarketing is a two-way instantaneous communication with

immediate feedback quality and a high level of customization. On the contrary, television ads are one-way communications, with no immediate feedback quality, and are only customizable within the rules and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) or equivalent government regulation in other countries. This is not to say that telemarketing is a better form of advertising than television, however, these are characteristics that advertising staffs need to consider when selecting one medium over another. This is also relevant to IO planning. IO planners that are seeking to utilize two-communications as a medium for their IO products, must, for example, ensure that their target audience is willing to participate. If they are not willing to participate, then the two-communication becomes a one-way communication and possibly a complete waste of resources and time. Therefore, medium selection for IO must account for the operational environment that IO product will be introduced to and what kind of feedback the IO planners may need.

## **5. Summary of Key Concepts in Fundamental Advertising**

The best practices of advertising change based on variables such as product, brand, environment, target audience, and medium utilized, however, ideal advertising can be described based on the fundamental ideas involved with it. The American Marketing Association expresses fundamental principles of print advertising in a paper written by Steve Blom. Although these principles were written for effective print advertising, some of the following fundamental ideas of advertising, based on his work, have slight derivations that make them applicable to all mediums. They are:

- **“Establish the Objective** – The objective will serve as your focal point that you can reference at all stages of creative development.”(Blom. 2001)
- **“Present One Central Proposition** - Once you’ve established the objective, stick to it and resist the temptation to introduce other points and concepts. Avoid cluttering up your message with additional information that isn’t germane to the objective.” (Blom. 2001)



- **Select an Approach** – Select an approach for the campaign and ensure that approach supports the central proposition. Ensure all elements within the ad support the proposition as well.
- **“Sell the Merits of the Product or Service”**(Blom. 2001) – Ensure the target audience “knows what is in it for them if they pay attention to your ad. Make sure the ad avoids outlandish claims or statements that cannot be substantiated. Document your claims where possible to build credibility with your audience and speak in terms that readers will understand.” (Blom. 2001)
- **“Emphasize Benefits, not Facts** - In most cases, facts are of little interest”(Blom. 2001) to target audiences. “Produce ads to solve a problem or offer helpful ideas. Factual ads often serve only to boost the egos of those who are trying to do the selling.”(Blom. 2001)
- **Select a Medium** – Select a medium that is appropriate for the environment the advertisement will run in. Take into consideration customization, rules and regulations, and feed back requirements when selecting the medium.
- **“Design the Overall Ad for Easy Understanding** - Be sure to use simple and specific language. Call the” target audience “to action and give them the essential information needed to act. By aligning the call to action with the ad’s objective you can help facilitate the ad’s success.”(Blom. 2001)
- **“Illustrate Your Product in Use** - Help your potential customers relate to the product by demonstrating how the product works and what its advantages are... Show the product in action and create a visualization of your central sales point: what the product will do for the customer.” (Blom. 2001)
- **“Avoid Humor & Shock Value** - Humor is probably not the primary objective. What advertisers find humorous is not necessarily funny to the audience. The common factor is the potential interest/need in a product that the ad is trying to sell — not humor. Although shocking the audience is often attention getting, it probably doesn’t support your ad’s objective. Attempts at humor or attempts at

shocking the audience can frustrate, confuse, or in some cases, even offend them; three objectives advertisers do not want the ad to meet.” (Blom. 2001)

- **“Repeat a Successful Ad -- Drop an Unsuccessful Ad -** Stay with a winner. A well-designed ad will not wear out as fast as a poor one. Continue to run the ad until the audience tires of the message. Repetition reinforces the message that achieves the objectives, and frequency reinforces basic selling propositions.” (Blom. 2001)
- **Develop a MOE mechanism** – Ensure the campaign has a mechanism in place to argue the effectiveness of the advertising. Since advertising is an expense that needs to be justified, having a well-developed mechanism to express effectiveness is a necessity.
- **“Don’t Blame Ad Placement for Poor Performance -** A well-designed ad will perform well wherever its location: front or back, left-hand page or right. Focusing on ad position could cause advertisers to lose sight of the importance of ad design.” (Blom. 2001)

Through these fundamental ideas of advertising, staffs can maximize their effectiveness when promoting their product or service and display that effectiveness to their superiors. These fundamentals are the key to successful advertising. “After examining readers’ reactions to tens of thousands of ads studied over the years, there is little doubt that the best way to create an effective ad is to present one key idea; in a manner which is easy to read and understand; that speaks to the needs and interests of your target audience; and is supported by the headline, illustration, and text.” (Blom. 2001) These fundamental ideas of advertising could be adapted into basis for a PSYOP or PA campaign and could be used to supplement current IO planning for a more intuitive planning process. An example of this adaptation for IO use is presented in Chapter IV.

## **D. SOME CONCERNS WITH ADVERTISING AND MARKETING**

### **1. Legality**

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is the governing authority for marketing and advertising in the United States. For example, section 5 of the FTC Act makes rules and regulations designed to protect the consumer from deceptive or misleading campaigns. “In order to be in compliance with these rules and regulations, advertisers should follow these general guidelines. They are:

- Avoid writing ads that make false claims or exaggerate the availability of the product or the savings the consumer will enjoy.
- Avoid running out of advertised sale items. If this does happen, businesses should consider offering “rain-checks” so that the consumer can purchase the item later at the same reduced price.
- Avoid calling a product “free” if it has cost closely associated with it. If there are costs associated with the free item they need to be clearly disclosed in the ad.” (Hillstrom and Hillstrom. 2006)

Marketing and advertising are complex processes that are subject to laws that continually change, therefore, marketing staffs need to ensure they are compliance with the FCC when planning, organizing, and executing their strategy.

Title 10 of the United States Code is a general legal basis for all services and the Department of Defense. Information Operations fall under similar, if not more restrictive, rules and regulations than civilian advertisers under Title 10. The restrictions that Title 10 place on IO do not necessarily have the same impact that the FCC has on civilian advertising, however, given the fact that both fields are restricted makes comparison of their strategy development more valid.

## 2. Negative Branding

Negative branding is an un-intended negative reaction to a stimulus that can cause a stigma on a product, brand, or company as a whole. This can happen in many different ways associated with brand image attributes. “Brand image attributes are those pieces of information that are linked to the brand in consumer memory and thus make up part of the brand’s image.” (Keller. 1993) One excellent example of un-intended negative branding in the civilian world is the story of General Motor’s release of the Chevy Nova in South America. This story asserts that the Nova sold poorly in Latin America because the phrase “No va” means “it doesn’t go” in Spanish and that the car did not start selling until they changed the name to Caribe. “The story of the Chevy Nova is a classic example of an urban legend, a story that is told and retold so often that it is believed to be true even though it isn’t. Like most other urban legends, there is some element of truth in the story (*no va* indeed means “it doesn’t go”), enough truth to keep the story alive. And, like many urban legends, the story has the appeal of showing how the high and mighty can be humiliated by stupid mistakes.” (Erichsen) Even though the story is an urban legend, it is still used by many marketing textbooks and marketing professors to warn of the consequences of inadequate preparation and market research. “There are literally thousands of references to the incident on the Internet, and the Nova example has been mentioned in textbooks and often comes up during presentations on cultural differences and advertising.” (Erichsen) The fact that the story exists and is listed in many text books<sup>1</sup> as an example of what not to do in marketing, creates a negative brand image attribute associated with GM. The negative brand image attribute that GM is now intertwined with is that they are insensitive to Latin American markets because their marketing team did not take the time to understand the Spanish language. This type of negative branding can happen to any company at any time, therefore, marketing teams must be thoroughly prepared to respond quickly to any negative branding that may arise.

The possibility of negative branding in an operational environment is always a threat to mission accomplishment that must be countered with aggressive IO. One

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<sup>1</sup>One example that has Chevy Nova story: Yunker, John Beyond Borders: Web Globalization Strategies p 1995

example of this occurred in Iraq circa 2004. The situation in Iraq included many hardships for the average Iraqi including unreliable electricity. The negative branding occurred with the "...Iraqis' man-on-the-moon analogy: If you Americans are capable of putting a man on the moon, why can't you get the electricity to come on? If you are not turning the electricity on, it must be because you don't want to and are punishing us." (Baker. 2006) Given the United States has an many established brand images, like the "man-on-the-moon," in most areas of the world, an IO campaign must highlight the positive attributes associated with that U.S. brand and mitigate the any negative attributes, or negative branding, as quickly as possible.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

This chapter defined and explained marketing and advertising, the fundamental ideas and processes of marketing and advertising, and some of the concerns associated with these fields. Marketing and advertising are essential elements of American business that companies utilize to introduce, promote, distribute, and sell products or services to target audiences. Marketing and advertising are primarily dependent on their staffs understanding the marketplace, the target customer's characteristics, and their brand position, to develop specific campaigns designed for maximum value exchange. Some of the problems associated with marketing and advertising are the legal restrictions delineated by the Federal Trade Commission and the effects that negative branding can have on a product, service, or company as a whole. The planning process for marketing has similar objectives to planning an Information Operations campaign and could be a key supplement the IO planning process for more intuitive and effective IO output. Advertising campaigns are an extension of marketing campaigns that may be suited for specific portions of IO planning, such as, PSYOP or PA. The analysis of compatibility and the idea of correlating marketing and advertising planning into IO will be explained further in the next chapter and are the objective of Chapter IV.

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## **IV. IO VS. CIVILIAN ADVERTISING AND MARKETING**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Information Operations and civilian marketing and advertising may have similar objectives that make the correlation between the planning and execution of their strategic campaigns valid. This chapter analyzes and compares these similar objectives to justify a recommendation for adaptation of current IO planning, tactics, and execution to that of civilian marketing and advertising campaigns in order to produce more efficient and effective IO. The first section in this chapter will compare the objectives of civilian marketing and advertising to those of IO. The next section examines the correlation of each fundamental aspect of marketing and advertising to IO planning and execution in order to create a basis for a recommendation in the next chapter.

### **B. OBJECTIVE OF IO AND CIVILIAN MARKETING**

Information Operations and marketing and advertising have very similar, if not the same, objectives. “Information operations are marketing communications.” (Doty and Trent. 2005) The objective of Information Operations has been specifically stated in Chapter II of this work, in summary however, it is the actions taken in the physical dimension of the information environment to influence the information and cognitive dimensions of target audiences to develop popular support for U.S. objectives that specifically work toward overall mission accomplishment. Similarly, the objective of marketing is to generate popular support, through advertising and promotion, for a company, product, or service in order to create brand loyalty with target audiences and/or entice target audiences to buy brand specific products or services. Both of these objectives, state that their purpose is to utilize various physical dimension means to influence a target audience or populace to act in accordance with organizational plans to meet organizational objectives. Due to this, IO and marketing essentially have the same over-arching basic objective: Influence people, who may normally act in a manner detrimental to your objectives, to act in a manner conducive to your objectives. Since

these two fields essentially have the same over-arching objective and the U.S. is a global leader in effective civilian marketing, the argument of utilizing the fundamental aspects of marketing to create a basis for effective IO planning and execution is valid. “The U.S. military’s failure to adequately integrate and successfully execute IO campaigns is ironic; after all, Americans live in a society dominated by marketing communications. From political lobbying to commercial advertising, organizations sway Americans’ decisions. Information operations have the same goal as marketing communications: to influence a target audience to respond positively to a message. Because IO and marketing both attempt to elicit physical as well as psychological responses, both ought to utilize similar methods. The U.S. military should tap the abundance of creative marketing talent in America and implement a more complete approach to IO planning and execution.” (Doty and Trent. 2005) If the correlation of IO and fundamental marketing is possible, then that may be the key to simplifying and expediting the IO strategic planning process and the way forward to becoming a global leader in effective IO.

Advertising and IO also have similar objectives as well. However, advertising is more suited toward specific portions of IO like, Psychological Operations. The objective of advertising is to present a message over a medium easily accessible to a target audience in order to inform or persuade them about an “...organization, product, service, or idea,” (Silk. 2006) with the successive goal of maximizing value exchange between company and target audience. The objective of PSYOP is “...to influence foreign attitudes, perceptions, and behavior in favor of U.S. goals and objectives during peacetime and in times of conflict.” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2003). Further, “PSYOP characteristically are delivered as information for effect...” (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2003) In other words, PSYOP are characteristically delivered messages for effect over some type of medium to inform or persuade foreign audiences to favor U.S. goals and objectives. The intended value exchange in PSYOP, from target audience to the U.S., is the support for U.S. goals and objectives and from the U.S. to the target audience, is the psychological piece of mind, or physical attributes, attained through their cooperation. Just as in advertising, the ultimate goal is to maximize value exchange between target audiences and the organization. Due to this, the same argument



made for correlating IO and marketing strategy and tactics can be made for advertising and PSYOP strategy and tactics. Utilizing fundamental advertising processes may lead to more effective IO via more effective PSYOP.

### **C. ANALYSIS OF COMPATIBILITY**

With the over-arching objectives of IO, marketing, and advertising established as very closely related, if not the same, the next step to justify the adaptation of civilian marketing and advertising processes into IO, is to examine the fundamentals of both, marketing and advertising to ensure their relevance can, and should, be correlated with IO.

#### **1. Understanding The Marketplace and IO.**

Understanding the marketplace is the civilian equivalent of understanding the operational environment. As previously stated in Chapter II, understanding the marketplace includes research of all elements of the market environment that may influence the marketing staff's decisions during the development of the marketing campaign. The military utilizes intelligence to do the same thing; however, their client is the JFC, and his staff, whom, like marketing staffs, need to fully understand the situation they are facing in order to plan appropriately. This is accomplished through detailed explanations of all aspects of the situation and environment in which operations are to take place. "Before military activities in the information environment can be planned, the current "state" of the dynamic information environment must be collected, analyzed, and provided to commanders and their staffs. This requires intelligence on relevant portions of the physical, informational, and cognitive properties of the information environment, which necessitates collection and analysis of a wide variety of information and the production of a wide variety of intelligence products..." (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 2006) Although these naming conventions of understanding the environment are different for civilian marketers and military planners, the objective of ensuring the complete understanding of all aspects of the environment is a pre-requisite for both successful marketing campaigns and IO campaigns.

Since both, understanding the marketplace and understanding the operational environment, have the same objective, the corollary for improving IO strategy is through the tactics utilized by market researchers to understand the market place. These tactics include: conducting surveys, focus groups, meetings, and in-depth interviews. At the strategic level of planning IO, these tactics may not be available to alter the overall IO strategy; however, at the operational and tactical level of IO they should be utilized to the fullest extent possible and can be planned as an overall strategic IO objective. General Baker expressed the value to IO in conducting leadership meetings with local leaders in Iraq:

Another benefit of these engagement sessions was an increase in our understanding of the culture. We had not undergone cultural training before deploying to Iraq, but we received a significant amount of it through on-the-job training during these sessions. In fact, many of the tactics, techniques, and procedures we adopted that allowed us to strike a balance between conducting operations and being culturally sensitive came from the ideas presented to us during meetings with leaders of our key target audiences. (Baker. 2006)

Utilizing civilian market research tactics to develop a better understanding of the operational environment for IO is excellent idea and should become a standardized strategic objective of U.S. IO.

## **2. Understanding the Customer and IO**

In order for marketing staffs to develop and execute a successful strategy, they utilize market research to understand the customer. “An information operation can be viewed as selling a mission (such as the U.S. presence in Iraq) to the local population. Just as a sound marketing strategy must first comprehend the target market, or customers, successful IO must begin with understanding the people it is attempting to affect.” (Doty and Trent. 2005) Market researchers conduct “one-on-one interviews, focus groups, or online surveys, to collect detailed information on customer needs, interests, and desires.” (Armstrong, Gary and Kotler, Philip. 2006) Researchers then use this information to answer specific questions that will assist in the development of their strategic and operational planning. These questions include:

- “Who are your customers and potential customers?
- What kind of people are they?
- Where do they live?
- Can and will they buy the product you’re offering?
- Are you offering the kinds of goods they want at the best place, the best time and best amounts?
- Are your prices consistent with what the buyers view as the products’ values?
- Are you applying the promotional programs in a way that will bring about success?
- Who are your competitors?” (Bellis. 2008)

These same questions can be tailored to be relevant for IO planners. For example, Table 1 expresses an example of the transformation of civilian market research questions to IO relevant questions for operational environment research:

<b>Civilian Market Research</b>	<b>IO Relevant</b>
Who are your customers and potential customers?	Who are the people you are trying to influence?
What kind of people are they?	What kind of people are they?
Where do they live?	Where do they live?
Can and will they buy the product you're offering?	Can and will they ever accept the IO products' message/s?
Are you offering the kinds of goods they want at the best place, the best time and best amounts?	Are the IO products offering things that the target audience will want at the best place, best time, and best amounts?
Are your prices consistent with what the buyers view as the products' values?	Is the price that the target audience will have to pay for their compliance/support appropriate given the value they will gain?
Are you applying the promotional programs in a way that will bring about success?	Are you applying the promotional programs in a way that will be receptive to the target audience?
Who are your competitors?	Who are you competing with to influence the target audience?

Table 1. Example of Civilian Market Research Questions Transformed for IO Relevance

Using questions that guide civilian market research and transforming them into IO relevant questions is one way for IO planners to specify to their Intelligence support community what information they will need to support the IO planning process. The answers of these types of questions could also assist IO planners in segmentation and targeting of a populace and help focus the entire IO effort to meet JFC objectives. Just as

in marketing, understanding the customer, or local populace in IO, is a key pre-requisite for focusing the campaign effort and developing successful operations to meet organizational objectives.

### **3. Market Segmentation and Targeting and IO**

Market segmentation and targeting is the one of the most relevant, and useful, correlations between civilian marketing and IO. The purpose of market segmentation, from a civilian perspective, is to designate which segments, based on various demographics and characteristics, of the market will most value the product, idea, or service the company is offering and eliminate those that will not. The result focuses the entire marketing effort on the segment that will most likely maximize the value exchange. As specified in Chapter II, this is targeting. Targeting the specific audience that will most value the product, service, or idea allows the marketing team to develop a campaign that is in concert with the audience's values, morals, ideas, and, most importantly, their emotions. "This brings me to my first essential IO observation: To be effective, you must tailor themes and messages to specific audiences." (Baker. 2006) This gives the best chance for a marketing strategy to be successful and its execution to be effective in meeting organizational objectives. This is no different for Information Operations.

In Information Operations, segmenting and targeting the populace is the best chance for an IO effort to be successful. This idea has been proven as an effective approach to IO.

Once we appreciated the dynamics of the demographics in our AO, we found that we could easily fit Iraqi citizens into three broad categories: those who would never accept the Coalition's presence in Iraq (religious fundamentalists, insurgents, terrorists); those who readily accepted the Coalition's presence in Iraq (typically secular, Western-educated pragmatists); and the vast majority of Iraqis, who were undecided. We referred to this last category as the silent majority and focused much of our information operations on influencing this group. (Baker. 2006)

General Baker segmented the local populace in his area of responsibility and then targeted a specific segment resulting in a brigade-wide understanding of who the target

audience was for their IO efforts. “Target audiences are key. You should assume that the silent majority will discount most of the information Coalition forces disseminate simply because they are suspicious of us culturally. Therefore, you must identify and target respected community members with IO themes. If you can create conditions where Arabs are communicating your themes to Arabs, you can be quite effective.” (Baker. 2006) From this understanding, the IO effort could then focus on developing IO products to be more effective by specifically designing them for their target audience. General Baker’s innovative approach to IO that utilized these marketing techniques is a excellent example of how segmenting and targeting can be used for effective IO.

Table 2 displays another example of possible segmentation:

<b>Hypothetical Construct of Theater-Based Segments</b>					
<b>Segment Name</b>	<b>Positive Coalition Attitudes (%)</b>	<b>College Educated (%)</b>	<b>Early Adopters (%)</b>	<b>Likelihood of Expressing Opinions to Others</b>	<b>Occasionally Purchase Western Products (%)</b>
Die-hards	10	15	10	High	15
Skeptics	20	20	30	Medium	30
Uncommitted	40	30	45	Low	50
Reformers	60	60	80	Medium	75
Bandwagons	80	80	85	High	95

Table 2. Hypothetical Construct of Theater-Based Segments [From Enlisting Madison Avenue p. 64]

Through segmentation of a populace, like in Table 2, IO planners create the basis for targeting individual segments that are receptive to IO messages and those that will have the greatest impact on mission accomplishment. Segmenting and Targeting are two marketing techniques that can, and should, be utilized by IO planners to be more effective and efficient when planning IO.

#### **4. Product and Price Planning and IO**

As described in Chapter II, product and price planning are functions of marketing strategy designed to ensure that the product is designed to satisfy the wants and needs of the target audience and that it is priced appropriately for maximum value exchange. The major difference between civilian product and price planning and IO, is that the price paid for U.S. IO product support is rarely, if ever, a monetary figure. The price is the consequence an individual will have to endure for their support or compliance with the IO message. This price can be anything from simple harassment to death. IO planners can use this idea to guide the development of IO products to ensure that the “price” an individual has to endure does not exceed the value he receives from his compliance. For example, an IO program that offers free medical care to a local populace for an exchange of arms would not be successful if the people who accepted the exchange were later murdered by those who did not participate. In this instance, the price is obviously too high for individuals of a local populace, or target audience, to participate. On the other hand, an IO program that offers free medical care to a local populace, with only the intent of developing a positive relationship with the people, may be more likely to be successful because the price for participation is low. An IO product that does not equalize this exchange of value will not be as effective as one does. Price planning in IO can assist planners to balance the value exchange between the target audience and the U.S., which could lead to more effective IO products.

Product development is also a process that is relevant for IO planning. In civilian marketing, product development is specifically designed to maximize the perceived value from the target audience and to meet organizational brand requirements. This is accomplished through market research to refine the product as much as possible to appeal to the desires and emotions of the target audience and by placing the right amount of product in the right place at the right time. IO planners can take this approach to ensure that the products being developed are specifically designed to satisfy the desires, wants, or needs of the target audience and to improve, if needed, the perception of the

U.S. that that target audience has. Even though product development in IO planning is dependent on the accuracy of intelligence, utilizing this approach provides the best opportunity to develop effective IO products.

## **5. Branding and IO**

Branding of the U.S. and its military forces is going to happen, if it has not already happened through reputation alone, and can be useful, or detrimental, to mission objectives based on the perception a target audience has/develops. “Two choices confront the military in its approach to managing these perceptions. The military can leave these associations and its corresponding reputation to chance, or it can guide them along a focused path. This is the value of positioning. Positioning articulates the core meaning and purpose of a brand, and, when properly inculcated into the organization, guides all organizational behaviors and communications. If the U.S. military cares about instilling positive indigenous-audience attitudes toward U.S. operating forces in theater, all members of the U.S. force must carry that mindset and be properly aligned to that goal.” (Glenn, Helmus, and Paul. 2007) Correlation of branding techniques and IO planning could result in IO products that establish and develop the positive brand image desired for local support of U.S. objectives.

The power of a positive brand image is undeniable, however, once a negative brand has been established is difficult to change. If the local populace has already “branded” the U.S. negatively through their pre-conceived notions or through previous interactions, the task transforms from establishing a brand to changing the perception of the brand. Since the U.S. is subject to such pre-conceived notions, generating a new brand position to repair a negative one may be the situation for IO planners. Brand positioning is the process in which “the firm has to play out scenarios...that consider the question, if we pursue this segment, how would we approach it, and how would we want potential buyers to see us?” (Silk. 2006) This process of playing out scenarios could be utilized throughout the IO planning process to centralize over-arching themes and ensure a clear IO focus for designing products that support the new positive brand position.



Generating a new brand position can also be used as a tool to assist IO staffs in segmentation and targeting. For example, if IO planners play out a scenario that pursue a segment of the population, that no matter what value the IO product presents to this segment, will not result with the desired brand image of the U.S. campaign, then more than likely, that is not the correct segment of the population to pursue. The alternative is to pursue that segment, regardless, of the resulting brand image; however, the objective achieved must be extremely valuable to sacrifice the creditability of the brand image. Just as a marketing staff would utilize brand positioning to focus its efforts and assist in market segmentation and targeting, IO planners can use it to develop a positive target audience perception of U.S. operations and assist in the decision of which population segment IO should focus on. Generating a new brand position to improve negative perceptions, or maintaining a positive brand perception, is a key to developing the trust, confidence, and respect of target audiences that could result in more successful, effective, IO.

## **6. Promotion and IO**

In the civilian world, promotion is a vital part of marketing strategy; however, correlating this strategy to IO would only be useful in very limited situations. Civilians use promotion of their product or service to increase the awareness of its existence in target audiences and to try to develop the target audience's preference for said product or service. In IO, this would only be useful to express over-arching mission objectives and themes and for humanitarian assistance efforts. The promotion of over-arching themes may be effective to positively influence people as long as they are consistent with the target audience's best interest, easy to understand, and repeated often. "An IO campaign has a greater likelihood of success if messages are simple, few, and repeated often." (Baker. 2006) Promotion of a humanitarian assistance effort is generally accomplished by the international media coverage associated with the event that created the need for the assistance. Since many humanitarian assistance efforts mostly follow some sort of natural disaster or catastrophe, promotion of U.S. assistance is widely disseminated over many mediums without much IO planning; however, some coordination of the overall

theme of U.S. assistance is necessary. The marketing strategy of promoting a product or service may be vital for the success of a civilian company; however, the correlation to IO strategy can only be used in few IO situations that are ideally suited for promotion.

## **7. Medium Selection, Distribution, and IO**

Just as in marketing and advertising, IO planners must select a medium to carry the message to the target audience and a distribution channel for their IO products. Medium selection in IO planning may be selected by way of negation based on availability and also through intelligence of what would be the most effective medium for the selected target audience. Medium by negation is the common-sense approach to medium selection. For instance, broadcasting an IO message via television signal to a population, in which the vast majority do not own televisions, would not be a valid medium if targeting a large group of people was the intention. In addition to medium by negation, civilian marketing professors

Kotler, Roberto, and Lee recommend that planners consider three major approaches when determining media channels: mass, selective, and personal. Mass media (e.g., television, radio, billboards, newspapers) target large groups of people and are especially helpful when it is important to quickly inform a broad cross-section of a population. Selective media (e.g., direct mail, flyers, posters, telemarketing, Internet) are generally more cost-effective than mass media area and allow planners to communicate more information to a more narrowly defined target audience. Finally, personal media (i.e., one-on-one interactions with the target audience, such as soldier-civilian interactions, seminars, or training sessions) are more expensive than mass or selective media are but permit personalized interaction with the target audience and provide it detailed information while also building trust and addressing individualized target-audience barriers to message acceptance. Integration of all three approaches allows for mutually reinforcing messages. (Glenn, Helmus, and Paul. 2007)

Using these recommendations for medium selection could help IO planners to ensure their product is specifically tailored for their target audience and within the guidelines of budgetary limits.

Civilian distribution planning and techniques for IO products provide a natural correlation to improve IO strategy. When a marketing company realizes how their product is going to be used by the target audience, they then have to decide the best way to make the product available to them. The three examples explained in Chapter II, direct to end users, dealer network, and value added reseller, are the available distribution channel options. IO planners should consider the same options that civilian marketers do, and ensure they are utilizing a distribution channel that will maximize the effectiveness of their IO products while meeting the time requirements associated with the operational environment. For example using a “direct to end users” method to deliver an IO product may be the fastest delivery method, however, it might not be effective in an environment where the local populace is skeptical and un-trusting of the U.S. intentions. If there is an alternative delivery method available that could supply the product to the target audience, providing a less biased attitude toward the product and still meet operational time requirements, then that alternative delivery method may produce more effective IO results. These types of scenarios are situation and asset dependent; however, IO planners should understand and incorporate civilian distribution planning into their IO strategy for better IO results.

## **8. Key Concepts of Fundamental Marketing for IO**

The intention of this section is to summarize and correlate the fundamental aspects of marketing into IO planning steps. The following points represent what fundamental aspects of IO planning may entail based on civilian marketing planning.

- **Understanding the Market = Understanding the Operational Environment.** “Document the size of the market (Operational Environment...geographically, population demographics, ...ect ), major competitors (adversaries) and how they’re positioned (where they are at...what there objectives are and what are their IO capabilities).

- **Targeting and Segmenting.** “Group the prospective target audiences into “segments” that have similar problems and value the IO product in similar ways. By grouping them into segments, the staff can then efficiently target each group and tailor the product to them specifically...Understand the problems that the environment faces and evaluate the competition/adversary already in the operational environment. [After The Strategic Marketing Guidebook 8]
- **Understand the Customer = Understanding the Target Audience.** Talk with the target audience and potential target audiences. Conduct extensive operational environment research if time, budget and opportunity allow. Uncover the local populace’s true wants and needs to learn about what can be delivered to solve their problems and beat the adversary.
- **Create a Competitive Position.** “Identify areas where the adversary is vulnerable. Determine whether IO focus can be centered on those vulnerable areas of opportunity. Identify products/services the military can offer to meet the true needs of the people in a new and better way.” [After The Strategic Marketing Guidebook 8]
- **Define the value proposition.** “There are three core types of value that IO can deliver: operational efficiency (the lowest price), product leadership (the best product), or target audience intimacy (the best solution and service). Determine which one IO is best equipped to deliver; the answer is the “value proposition.”” [After The Strategic Marketing Guidebook 8]
- **Develop a Brand Strategy.** Understanding the target audience is key to developing a brand strategy. Utilize intelligence to ensure the brand strategy is in concert with the appropriate emotional aspects of the target audience. “List the features and benefits of your product/ service. A feature is an attribute – a color, a configuration; a benefit is what that feature does for the target audience. Determine which benefits are most

important to each of your segments. Identify which benefits are emotional – the most powerful brand strategies tap into emotions... Look at the emotional benefits and boil them down to one thing that your target audience should think of when they think of the U.S. military. That’s what the brand should represent.” (The Strategic Marketing Guidebook p. 11) In addition, “Poll the people, soldiers and intermediaries. Are their impressions consistent with your strategy, if not, work on the elements that can be improved.” [After The Strategic Marketing Guidebook 11]

- **Develop Product and Price Planning.** Ensure the product is tailored to meet the wants and needs of the target audience, not just the mission objective and campaign goals. Ensure the price the individual will have to pay is appropriate and maximizes value for both the individual and the U.S.
- **Promotion.** If promotion is appropriate for the IO campaign, ensure it is in concert with what the target audience would appreciate. Also, ensure that the promotion is in line with the company’s brand image.
- **Perform effective campaign testing** - Test IO campaign messages and themes on sample lists before widespread launch to determine effectiveness and refine messaging and other campaign elements as necessary. Use third party sources to conduct surveys when bias to U.S. brand is apparent.
- **Measure and modify programs in real time** - Monitor IO campaign responses as they are being executed. Track adversary support through anything from adverse news stories to negative graffiti sightings. Track number of leads generated (supporters) and lead quality.
- **Distribution.** Ensure that the distribution channel selected for the IO product is the one that will maximize effectiveness of the IO message and will meet the time requirements of the mission it is supporting. The right mix of distribution can result in a competitive advantage for the U.S. military, improve brand image, and result in more effective IO.

Together, these steps are a correlation of the fundamental aspects of successful marketing campaigns transformed into possible IO planning building blocks. These building blocks could assist planners to better understand their objectives and to develop more effective IO products designed for efficiency, effectiveness, and U.S. brand improvement.

## **9. Key Concepts of Fundamental Advertising and IO**

The intention of this section is to summarize the possible correlation of the fundamental aspects of advertising and IO. The following points represent what fundamental aspects of IO planning (specifically PSYOP) may entail based on civilian advertising planning.

- **Establish the IO/PSYOP Objective** – Answer the question: What is the objective of the IO mission/campaign? The answer/objective will serve as the focal point that can be referenced at all stages of creative development.
- **Present One Central IO/PSYOP Proposition** – Once the objective is established, stick to it and resist the temptation to introduce other points and concepts. Avoid cluttering up the message with additional information that isn't germane to the objective.
- **Select an IO/PSYOP Approach** – Select an approach for the campaign and ensure that approach supports the central proposition/objective. Ensure all elements within the leaflet/handbill support the objective as well.
- **Express the Merits of the Support** – Ensure the target audience knows what is in it for them if they pay attention to the product. Make sure the product avoids outlandish claims or statements that cannot be substantiated. Document the claims where possible to build credibility with the audience and speak in terms that target audiences will understand.

- **Emphasize Benefits, not Facts** - In most cases, facts are of little interest to target audiences. Produce messages to solve a problem or offer helpful ideas.
- **Select a Medium** – Select a medium that is appropriate for the environment. Take into consideration customization, rules and regulations, and feed back requirements when selecting the medium.
- **Design the IO Product for Easy Understanding** - Be sure to use simple and specific language. Call the target audience to action and give them the essential information needed to act. By aligning the call to action with the leaflet's objective, it can help facilitate success.
- **Illustrate Your Product in Use** - Help the potential target audience to relate to the product by demonstrating how the product works and what its advantages are. Show the product in action and create a visualization of what the product will do for the target audience.
- **Avoid Humor & Shock Value** - Humor is not the primary objective. The common factor is the potential interest/need in a product that the product is trying to express — not humor. Although shocking the audience is often attention getting, it probably doesn't support the IO objective. Attempts at humor or attempts at shocking the audience can frustrate, confuse, or in some cases, even offend the target audience; three objectives IO planners do not want to meet.
- **Repeat a successful IO Product -- Drop an Unsuccessful Product** - Stay with a winner. A well-designed IO product will not wear out as fast as a poor one. Continue to distribute the product until the audience tires of the message. Repetition reinforces the message that achieves the objectives, and frequency reinforces basic proposition/objective.
- **Develop a MOE mechanism** – Ensure the IO campaign has an idea of a mechanism to argue the effectiveness of the IO product. Since IO, like all

military aspects, is field that needs justify expense, having a well-developed mechanism to express effectiveness is a necessity.<sup>2</sup> [After Steve Blom's article "Principles of Effective Print Advertising." Based on the fundamental ideas of advertising, these IO guidelines could be used by IO staffs to maximize their PSYOP or PA efforts. In advertising, these fundamentals are the basis for successful campaigns and with some adaptation for IO use, they could be the basis for a more successful and intuitive IO campaign.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

This chapter emphasized the similarities of the objectives of IO, marketing, and advertising to justify a correlation of their fundamental processes. Given that the overarching objectives of marketing and advertising are very similar, if not the same, to IO objectives and the United States is a world leader in advertising and marketing, the correlation of their processes to develop more intuitive, efficient, and effective IO planning is a natural progression. This chapter further expressed the correlation by presenting fundamental aspects of advertising and marketing altered for relevance of IO planning. Although these steps are not specifically detailed, they do meet the objective of developing a more intuitive planning thought process for IO and are the basis for the recommendations in the next chapter.

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<sup>2</sup> After Steve Blom's article "Principles of Effective Print Advertising."



## **V. CONCLUSION**

### **A. REVISITING THE OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this work was to analyze and develop the concept of utilizing civilian advertising and marketing fundamentals for Information Operations planning and execution. This analysis focused on the integration of traditional Information Operations planning, tactics, and strategies, with those known to be successful in American civilian marketing and advertising in order to create a more intuitive, efficient, and effective IO process. The objective was met through the presentation of current Information Operations structure and planning process, marketing and advertising fundamentals and planning processes, an analysis of compatibility and relevance between IO and marketing/advertising, and examples of adapted marketing/advertising fundamental building blocks to IO. Based on the analysis and presentation of material the following section provides further, in-depth, recommendations for using marketing and advertising processes in Information Operations.

### **B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The analysis of the compatibility of marketing, advertising, and IO planning expresses that these processes objectives are very similar and that the fundamental aspects of marketing and advertising can be integrated into relevant, intuitive, IO planning building blocks. Utilizing these adapted fundamentals as a primary planning tool or as a supplement to current IO planning processes provides an intuitive alternative to the complex processes presented in JP3-13. These fundamentals could assist individuals who are new to the IO planning process to understand what is needed from the IO cell at each stage of planning development and could be utilized to simplify and focus the entire IO effort.

## 1. Understand the Fundamentals

In order to be truly proficient and effective at planning Information Operations, an IO cell must fully understand the over-arching objectives of what they are trying to accomplish and should aspire to master the fundamentals of IO. The operational objectives of IO may vary based on mission requirements, however, over-arching strategic objectives and themes can be planned for and understood by utilizing adapted fundamentals of marketing and advertising. A summary of the example presented in Chapter IV of this fundamental adaptation for IO is displayed in Table 3.

Marketing and IO	Advertising and IO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand the operational environment</li><li>• Target and segment the populace</li><li>• Understand the target audience</li><li>• Create a competitive position/objective</li><li>• Define the value proposition</li><li>• Understand/develop the brand strategy</li><li>• Develop the product</li><li>• Plan for the price</li><li>• Promote the message</li><li>• Perform campaign testing for effectiveness</li><li>• Measure and modify messages in real time</li><li>• Distribute accordingly</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish the Objective</li><li>• Present one central message</li><li>• Select an approach</li><li>• Express the merits of support</li><li>• Emphasize benefits, not facts</li><li>• Select a medium</li><li>• Design IO products that are easy to understand</li><li>• Illustrate the product in use</li><li>• Avoid humor and shock value</li><li>• Repeat a successful product, drop an unsuccessful one</li><li>• Develop an MOE mechanism</li></ul>

Table 3. Example of Adapted Fundamentals for IO

An IO cell staff member that understands, and is intimately familiar, with these adapted fundamentals will have a greater understanding and focus of the entire IO planning process. This understanding of fundamental IO may lead to more effective IO products and the emergence of the U.S. as a world leader in Information Operations management.

## **2. Understand the Brand**

In almost all corners of the world, people have some kind of pre-conceived notion/s about the United States. Good or bad, this pre-conceived notion is a brand.

In a world increasingly connected by ubiquitous 24/7 media, there has to be a “brand strategy” - the message has to be coordinated and consistent, and it has to respond to stereotypes already in circulation. nation-branding, then, is what you get when you take traditional public diplomacy strategies and add marketing tools designed to change national perceptions. (Risen. 2005)

This is a reality that IO planners need to understand when developing and assessing IO products. Understanding the general “brand” a target audience already has of the U.S., is a key piece of information that will help guide the development of the IO campaign and ensure that IO planners do not develop a product based on a misconception of the target audience’s perception of the U.S. Also, because target audiences that have negatively branded the U.S., will probably react differently to an IO message based on their knowledge of, and experiences with, the U.S. in the past, IO planners must ensure that they recognize what kind of brand they are working with and utilize third party distributors of IO products as necessary to maximize effectiveness and mitigate bias. Further, when a brand position had been developed by IO planners for their IO products, “...consistency is key, because a negative interaction with any single person can spoil the customer’s perception of the practice’s entire brand.” (Glenn, Helmus, and Paul. 2007) Understanding the brand that the U.S. has in an area operations is vital for the development of an effective IO product and campaign

### **3. Plan to Evolve IO Immediately and Delegate IO Authority as Necessary**

Information Operations take place in a constantly and consistently changing information environment. In order to plan for changes and inconsistencies involved with this type of atmosphere, quick evolutions of IO messages and themes may be required to remain effective and support the over-arching strategic IO objectives. Utilizing marketing and advertising techniques, such as, surveys, focus groups, and meetings to assess the effectiveness of IO products and messages are one way of recognizing that a change in those IO products or messages is needed. This process should be repeated as often as possible to ensure that the evolution of the IO effort is maximizing the effectiveness of the IO products. This is a pro-active approach to IO that necessitates delegation of IO authority to the operational, and perhaps tactical, level of planning, however, given the advantages associated with being on the offensive when engaged in IO combat with an adversary, this delegation is justified. General Baker expressed this idea, “Good reasons exist for some central control over IO themes and products under some circumstances, but information operations are Operations, and in my opinion that means commander’s business. IO is critical to successfully combating an insurgency. It fights with words, symbols, and ideas, and it operates under the same dynamics as all combat operations. An old Army saw says that the person who gets to the battle the “firstest” with the “mostest” usually wins, and this applies indisputably to information operations. In contrast, a consistent shortcoming I experienced was that the enemy, at least initially, consistently dominated the IO environment faster and more thoroughly than we did. Our adversary therefore had considerable success in shaping and influencing the perceptions of the Iraqi public in his favor.” (Baker. 2006) In order to ensure maximum effectiveness of IO, JFC IO objectives must ensure strategic IO plans to allow the evolution of operational and tactical IO products to occur and delegate the authority to execute those changes as necessary.

## **C. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The following is a list of potential future research based on this paper:

- Investigate the effectiveness of using civilian Branding methods in Information Operations for different operational environments.
- Apply civilian marketing techniques for IO in past areas of operations. Model and evaluate effectiveness of this approach.
- Further analyze and evaluate the correlation of civilian advertising methods to PSYOP or PA to improve PSYOP/PA effectiveness.
- Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of forming a Joint Information Operations Community.
- Analyze and evaluate current Information Operations effectiveness in combating the GWOT from a marketing prospective.
- Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of effective Information Operations compared to ineffective Information Operations in past/ current areas of operations.
- Investigate how different methods of distribution of IO products can affect the effectiveness of the IO message in different information environments.
- Investigate the correlation of the core competencies of each branch and IO to determine which branch is best suited for which portion of IO.

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